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The communal roosting behaviour and nesting of a group-living species, the Yellow-breasted Barbet *Trachyphonus margaritatus* in Djibouti

Mathieu Mahamoud-Issa, Bożena Sikora, Katarzyna Łosak, Stanisław Rusiecki and Tomasz S. Osiejuk

Summary

The African barbets (Lybiidae) are widespread and emblematic African birds, occupying a variety of habitats and usually conspicuous in their plumage colour and loud vocalizations. Some species live in pairs while others form small groups or colonies. Despite such diversity of social organization, there is still a lack of knowledge regarding the social behaviour for most of the group-living barbets species. In this study, we collected data on the communal roosting behaviour and the nesting activity of the Yellow-breasted Barbet *Trachyphonus margaritatus* somalicus in Djibouti. To do so, we monitored 21 roosting sites from 19 territories in four years between 2019 and 2023. Group size ranged from a single pair to more than ten individuals per group. Each group occupied a specific roosting site where several cavities were dug. The group members slept together within one cavity, and for most groups the roosting site did not change over the years of the monitoring. During the nesting period, the group members slept with the eggs and chicks within a single cavity that served for both roosting and nesting. Barbet cavities were also used by other bird species suggesting potential inter-specific competition with other cavity nester species.

Keywords: Djibouti, Lybiidae, *Trachyphonus margaritatus*, Communal roosting, Nesting period

Introduction

Cooperative breeding behaviour occurs in group-living species in which some individuals are non-breeders who postpone their own reproduction to provide alloparental care to the young of other breeding individuals (Koenig & Dickinson 2016). In cooperative breeding birds, it is often the offspring that delay their dispersal and stay with their parents to help in feeding the young of the next brood, which could allow the breeding female to adapt her investment in eggs and/or increase the survival of the chicks (Dias *et al.* 2015, Josi *et al.* 2020, Fortuna *et al.* 2023). In family group breeding, alloparental care also confers indirect fitness benefits to helpers via kin-selection in family group-living (Hamilton 1964, Griffin & West 2003). Cooperative breeding is observed in bird species across the globe and especially in the tropics and sub-tropics, with particularly high proportions in the Afrotropics and Australasia (Jetz & Rubenstein 2011). The African barbets, family Lybiidae, include 41 species from seven gen-

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era inhabiting sub-Saharan regions of Africa (Winkler *et al.* 2020). This family shows notably high levels of this behaviour, with over the half the species being group breeders (Soma & Brumm 2020).

The social behaviour of some of these barbet species has been described (Short & Horne 1980, 1982), but for most of them, there is still a lack of knowledge regarding many aspects of their social behaviour and the group breeding strategies. African barbets are cavity nesters, in which the breeding male and female (and sometimes helpers in cooperative breeding species) incubate and feed the young (Short & Horne 2001, Winkler *et al.* 2020). They are territorial birds that defend their roosting cavities against conspecific intrusion (Short & Horne 2001). As an example, pairs of Crested Barbets *Trachyphonus vaillantii* maintained a territory with several trees containing holes for roosting and nesting. Playback stimulation revealed that the birds produced territorial displays in front of each hole owned, not only the one used for nesting (Ward 1896). In the Black-collared Barbet *Lybius torquatus*, a group of birds defended a single territory year-round. All group members slept in a single roosting cavity outside the breeding season, but the group split into subgroups that occupied different nesting cavities within the same territory during the breeding season (Grimes 1976). In the Red-and-yellow Barbet *Trachyphonus erythrocephalus*, the group members nest and roost together or the helpers could roost in other holes nearby (Short & Horne 2001).

Interspecific competition could occur between African barbet species as well as with other species to occupy cavities. It was observed that the Lesser Honeyguide *Indicator minor* responded to vocalizations of the Black-collared Barbet (Ward 1986), playback of duets of the Black-billed Barbet *Lybius guifsobalito* might elicit a vocal response from the Spot-flanked Barbet *Tricholaema lachrymosa* (Short & Horne 1983), and the Green Barbet *Stactolaema olivacea* might react aggressively to calls of other sympatric barbet species such as the White-eared Barbet *Stactolaema leucotis* (Dowsett-Lemaire & Dowsett 1987). In 2018, we witnessed a pair of White-eared Barbets actively defending their cavity against a Crested Barbet in a tree in South Africa (Mahamoud-Issa, pers. obs).

In this study, we document the communal roosting behaviour and nesting activity of the Yellow-breasted Barbet *Trachyphonus margaritatus*, which is non-migratory, group breeding, and usually found in pairs or small social groups that defend a territory year-round with loud vocal duets and choruses (Short & Horne 1983, Soma & Brumm 2020). The species range across the semi-arid northern Sahel, from Mauritania to Somalia, with two recognized subspecies *T. m. margaritatus* and *T. m. somalicus,* the latter endemic to the Horn of Africa (Short & Horne 2020a). The male has a black patch on its throat that is lacking on the female (Redman *et al.* 2016). The Yellow-breasted Barbet excavates tunnels up to 1 m long and 5 cm diameter in a bank, cliff edge or wall that serves as the nesting site and lays 3 to 6 eggs with possibly two broods per season, with breeding seasons occurring around February–June in Somalia, as well as February–November in Ethiopia (Short & Horne 2020a). Many aspects of their social behaviour and breeding ecology, such as the incubation and nestling period, were unknown. In Djibouti, the subspecies *T. m. somalicus* is a common inhabitant of thornbush and acacia savanna, usually along dry watercourses from coastal regions (sea level) up to the Day Forest in the Goda Mountains at 1750 m altitude (Mahamoud-Issa, pers. obs). It has hitherto been unclear whether a group of birds occupied a single cavity or split up to use several cavities within a shared territory during and outside

the nesting season. Moreover, roost-site fidelity over a period of years has not been investigated.

We conducted four distinct field work sessions between 2019 and 2023 to investigate the communal roosting behaviour of the species, focusing on three questions: 1) do the birds from the same group sleep communally within a single cavity or do they split into several ones at the same roosting site, during and outside the nesting season?, 2) do the birds remain at the same site over the years?, and 3) does any inter-specific competition with other bird species occur for cavity ownership?

Methods

Visual monitoring of birds at their roosting site

We conducted two field work sessions in 2019 and 2020, during the cool season from January to March, in two areas in the Republic of Djibouti (Djalelo: 11°21′16″ N, 42°47′54″ E, 460 ha and Assamo: 11°1′22″ N, 42°52′53″ E, 200 ha, Fig. 1a). In 2022, a third fieldwork session was conducted just in Djalelo during the same period of the year. The two areas have a similar vegetation community that consists of dry thornbush of *Vachellia* sp. Our work consisted first of locating roosting cavities, accompanied with direct observation of birds in the surroundings. Once potential roosting sites were known, we visited each site at the end of the day, observing Yellow-breasted Barbets gathering around their cavities from 17:30 until they entered the cavities at dusk. During this observation period, we documented behaviours such as the time of arrival at the cavities site, when they entered, and any relevant interactions between group members. Since several cavities could be dug at the same site (Fig. 1b), we carefully annotated which specific cavity the birds entered. In 2020 and 2022, we used an endoscope (wireless Depstech, model WF010) to view inside the cavities so as to document the shape of the entrance corridor and the aspect of the chamber (we wanted to estimate how large it was and determine if the birds put any materials, such as small branches, inside) and to check the presence of chicks.

Catching sessions

We placed a mist net in front of a roost cavity before 06:00 to catch the birds leaving the cavity at dawn. Once caught, we weighed each of them, determined the sex, and ringed them with colour rings. For each group, we deployed one colour to the group and one colour unique to the individual (Fig. 1c). We took GPS coordinates of each site and assigned a unique name for each group of barbets according to the site where they were caught (Fig. 2a and 2b). We caught birds at both study sites from 1 February to 14 March 2019 and from 30 January to 4 March 2020. Another catching session occurred in Djalelo from 20 January to 9 March 2022 (Table 1).

Monitoring nesting activity

In March 2023, we monitored the nesting activity of 12 groups in Djalelo without catching the birds. During this period, we regularly visited each active site to take photographs and videos of the eggs and chicks with the same endoscope. To calculate the duration of incubation and the number of eggs laid, we visited cavities each day where birds had started to lay eggs. We recorded the begging calls of the hatchlings and the nestlings using a Sennheiser MKE600 connected to a H4n Zoom recorder

(audio files: 44.1 kHz, 16 bits). The adults' vocalizations at the cavity entrance were recorded at the site DS14 with a SongMeter Micro deployed 50 cm from the hole (16 bits, sampling rate: 24 000 Hz, gain: +18 dB, daily recording periods from 06:00 to 09:00 and from 16:00 to 19:00 over a period of 13 days). At dusk on each day, we noted whether all the adult birds entered the nesting cavity or used a different cavity nearby within the territory.

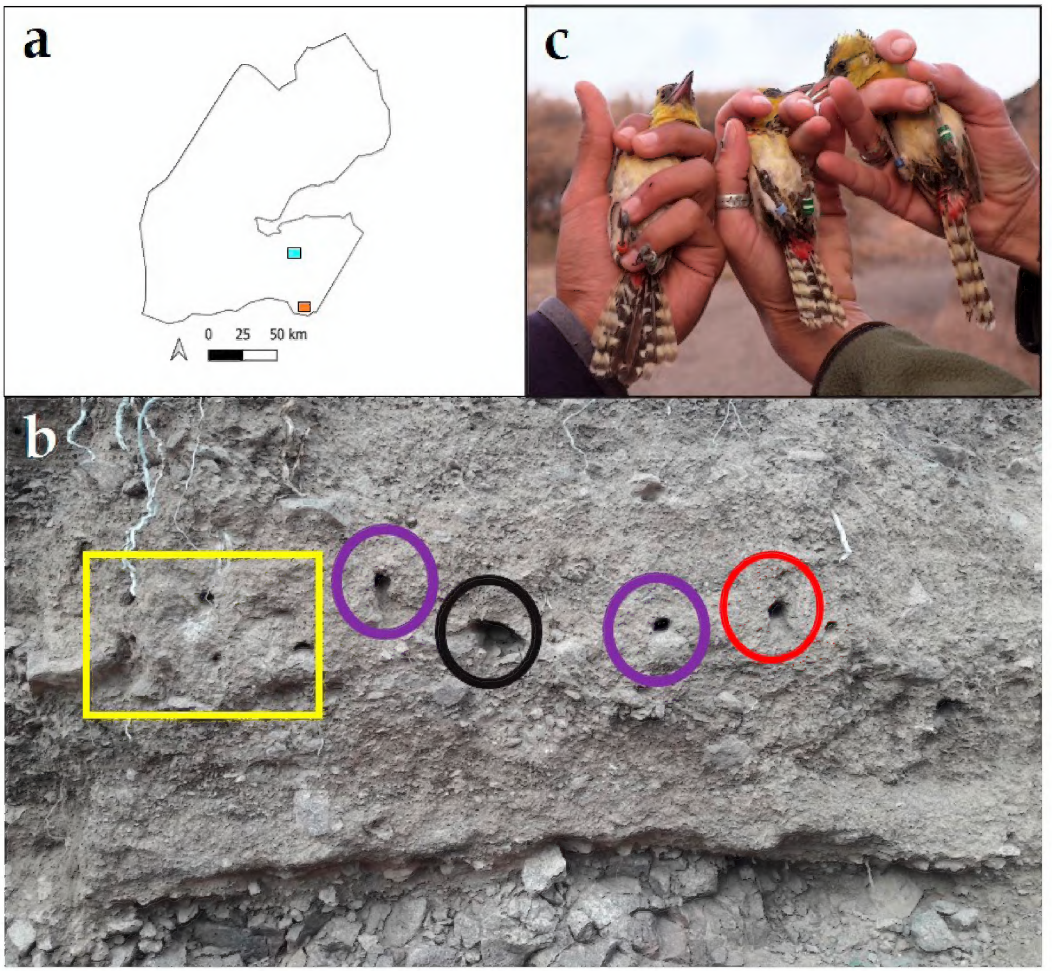

Figure 1. Map of Djibouti (a): the blue square shows the location of Djalelo study site (11°21′16″ N, 42°47′54″ E), and the brown square shows the Assamo study site (11°1′22″ N, 42°52′53″ E). A nest site with one actively used cavity (red circle), two unused cavities (purple circles), one old and destroyed cavity (black circle), and several digging trials (yellow rectangle) at site DS03 in 2022 (b). A picture of three birds caught together in 2022 at site DS05 (c).

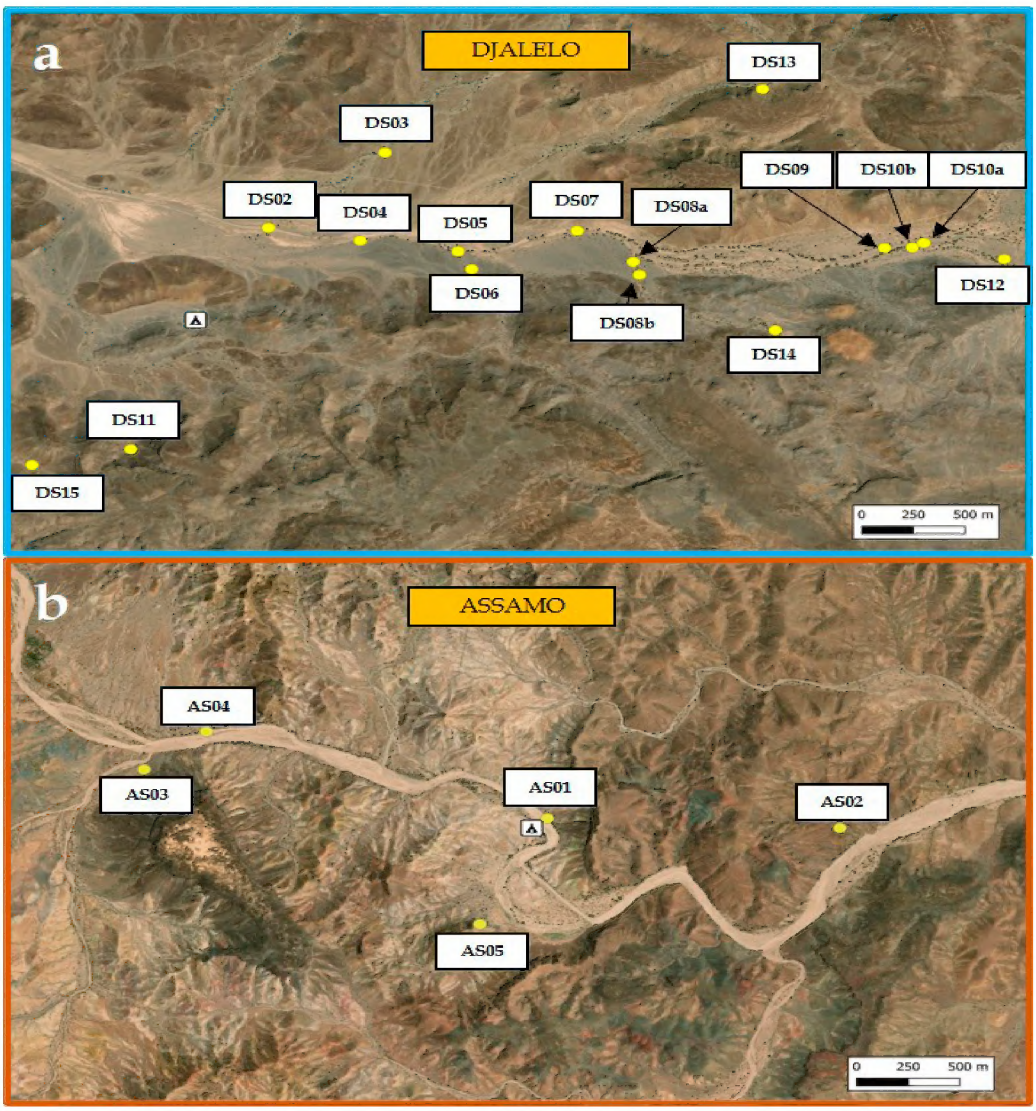

Figure 2. Satellite maps of study sites at Djalelo (a: 11°21′16″ N, 42°47′54″ E) and Assamo (b: 11°1′ 22″ N, 42°52′53″ E), showing the spatial arrangement of roosting sites monitored during the field study (21 sites in total). One site and its surroundings were occupied by one group of birds. Sites DS08a and DS08b were considered to be used in different years by one group in territory DS08, and sites DS10a and DS10b in different years by one group in territory DS10.

Results

Site selections and communal roosting behaviour

In total, 21 sites used by 19 distinct groups of birds were monitored along dried rivers in Djibouti between 2019 and 2022, with 20 sites comprising cavities dug into the steep riverbanks. At one different site, AS05, the birds used natural cavities in a rocky cliff. When dug into steep sandy riverbanks, the cavities consisted of one entrance with a single corridor of length 45.5 cm ± 1.87 (mean ± standard error; n = 29) leading to a

roosting chamber. The endoscope inspection revealed that old cavities abandoned by birds were usually full of arthropods, while actively used cavities were maintained clean. Groups of Yellow-breasted Barbets gathered near to their cavities at dusk (between 18:00 and 18:30 in January–March) and entered a single hole in which they all slept together. In the morning, the birds flew out of the cavity together between 05:50 and 06:40. The average distance between two neighbouring groups defending a distinct set of cavities was 758 ± 130 m (n = 17) with the closest ones about 129 m between DS09 and DS10b (active sites in 2022) and the most distant were 1752 m between AS01 and AS04. We observed that birds of the sites AS01, DS04 and DS05 switched from one roosting cavity to another one within the same site after being caught in our mist net.

Groups size and fidelity to the sites over years of monitoring

The total mean number of individuals per group across both areas in all three study years was 4.53 ± 0.39 (comprising both ringed and unringed individuals, 155 barbets from 21 sites). The mean number of birds per group by year was 3.45 ± 0.45 in 2019 (38 barbets, 11 sites), 5.9 ± 0.9 in 2020 (60 barbets, 10 sites) and 4.38 ± 0.53 in 2022 (57 barbets, 13 sites). The maximum number of birds found in a single cavity was 11 adult birds in 2020 at site DS07 (Table 1).

We ringed 135 birds caught at 21 cavity sites (Fig. 2) comprising 37 individuals in 2019, 46 individuals in 2020 (12 individuals were recaptured from the previous year) and 52 individuals in 2022 (four individuals were recaptured from previous years). This resulted in 119 distinct individuals ringed once and 16 recaptured. Some individuals escaped during the catching session which explains that the total number of individuals per site found during the study was more than the total ringed (Table 1).

Of the 16 recaptured individuals, 14 were using the same roosting sites where we found them the previous season. One female from the pair AS04 in 2019 was recaptured in the group AS01 in 2020 (distance between sites: 1745 m) and another female from DS05 in 2020 was caught in DS07 in 2022 (distance between sites: 593 m). All four individuals from group DS07 of 2019 were still present in 2020 plus six new individuals, probably their offspring. One female caught at site DS06 in 2019 was caught again in 2020 and 2022 at the same roosting site. These data revealed that some individuals could occupy the same territory for more than four years or could move to another neighbouring group between seasons.

In 2019, we observed one individual being prevented from entering a roosting hole at site DS11. While the two females and one male were already inside the cavity at dusk, another male tried to enter several times but was systematically pushed out by the other male. He ended up sleeping alone in another hole at the same site. A similar situation occurred at site AS01 in 2020. During the catching session, we found that the whole group was sleeping within a specific hole, but a lone female slept in another cavity close-by. We also observed potential competition for cavity usage with other bird species. On 12 March 2023 we found a Common Hoopoe *Upupa epops* subspecies probably *senegalensis*, nest within a cavity previously occupied by a group of barbets at DS06 in 2022). On several occasions we also observed a lone Blackstart *Oenanthe melanura* using an unoccupied barbet cavity for roosting. The Blackstart did not enter the burrow but stood at the entrance. When barbets noticed a Blackstart at a cavity entrance, they chased it away.

Table 1. Summary of the number of individuals per site for each year of monitoring, the number of individuals ringed and recaptured in 2020 and 2022. The number of males M and females F was reported, NA indicates that we could not determine the sex based on the presence of the black patch on the throat.

Site_ID	2019			2020				2022			
	Total N birds	N captured	Sex ratio	Total N birds	N captured	N recaptured	Sex ratio	Total N birds	N captured	N recaptured	Sex ratio
AS01	6	6	3M 3F	9	8	2	4M 4F	Not investigated	-	-	-
AS02	3	3	2M 1F	9	6	2	1M 2F 3NA	Not investigated	-	-	-
AS03	2	2	1M 1F	Unoccupied	-	-	-	Not investigated	-	-	-
AS04	2	2	1M 1F	2	1	0	1M 1F	Not investigated	-	-	-
AS05	2	2	1M 1F	2	1	1	1M 1F	Not investigated	-	-	-
DS02	Not investigated	-	-	Not investigated	-	-	-	3	3	0	2M 1F
DS03	Not investigated	-	-	Not investigated	-	-	-	2	2	0	1M 1F
DS04	3	3	1M 2F	6	5	1	1M 1F 3NA	6	6	0	2M 4F
DS05	Not investigated	-	-	6	6	0	2M 1F 3NA	6	5	0	3M 2F
DS06	6	6	4M 2F	5	5	1	2M 1F 3NA	6	6	2	2M 2F 2NA
DS07	4	4	3M 1F	11	9	4	5M 2F 2NA	7	6	2	4M 2F
DS08a	2	1	1M 1F	Unoccupied	-	-	-	Unoccupied	-	-	-
DS08b	Did not exist	-	-	5	4	1	1M 1F 2NA	3	3	0	2M 1F
DS09	Did not exist	-	-	Did not exist	-	-	-	2	2	0	1M 1F
DS10a	4	4	3M 1F	Destroyed	-	-	-	Destroyed	-	-	-
DS10b	Did not exist	-	-	Not investigated	-	-	-	5	4	0	1M 3F
DS11	4	4	1M 3F	Unoccupied	-	-	-	2	2	0	1M 1F
DS12	Not investigated	-	-	Not investigated	-	-	-	5	5	0	3M 2F
DS13	Not investigated	-	-	Not investigated	-	-	-	3	1	0	1M 1F
DS14	Not investigated	-	-	Not investigated	-	-	-	7	7	0	3M 4F
DS15	Not investigated	-	-	5	1	0	1NA	Not caught	-	-	-
Total	38	37		60	46	12		57	52	4	

Nesting activity

In March 2023, we monitored the behaviour of 12 family groups in Djalelo across the nesting period while all of them had a brood (Fig. 4a-d). One group had fledglings on 17 March while groups DS02 and DS10 had started to lay eggs, suggesting a nesting cycle spanning February to April in 2023. Another brood with at least four chicks within a cavity was found on the 3 November 2022 after an occasional monitoring of barbet cavities outside our fieldwork session. We found that the Yellow-breasted Barbet lays up to eight eggs in a single cavity, one egg appearing per day. At DS10 we found a single pair with five eggs. Although we were unable to document the exact incubation duration due to limited time in the field, we were able to identify that the incubation is more than two weeks. We estimated that three weeks was necessary between hatchlings and fledglings, and about six weeks from laying eggs to fledglings. The maximum number of birds that occupied a cavity in 2023 was 13 individuals: seven fledglings and six adults that slept at site DS07. All adult birds of a group continued to sleep within the same cavity with eggs or chicks. Nestlings used rattling calls to beg for food from within the cavity (Fig 4e). Rattling calls were also emitted by adult birds from within the cavity during the incubation period and possibly the nest reliefs. When feeding young, adult birds emitted *whoo* calls (Fig.5). We often observed several birds at a same site queuing in front of their nesting cavity to feed the young one after another.

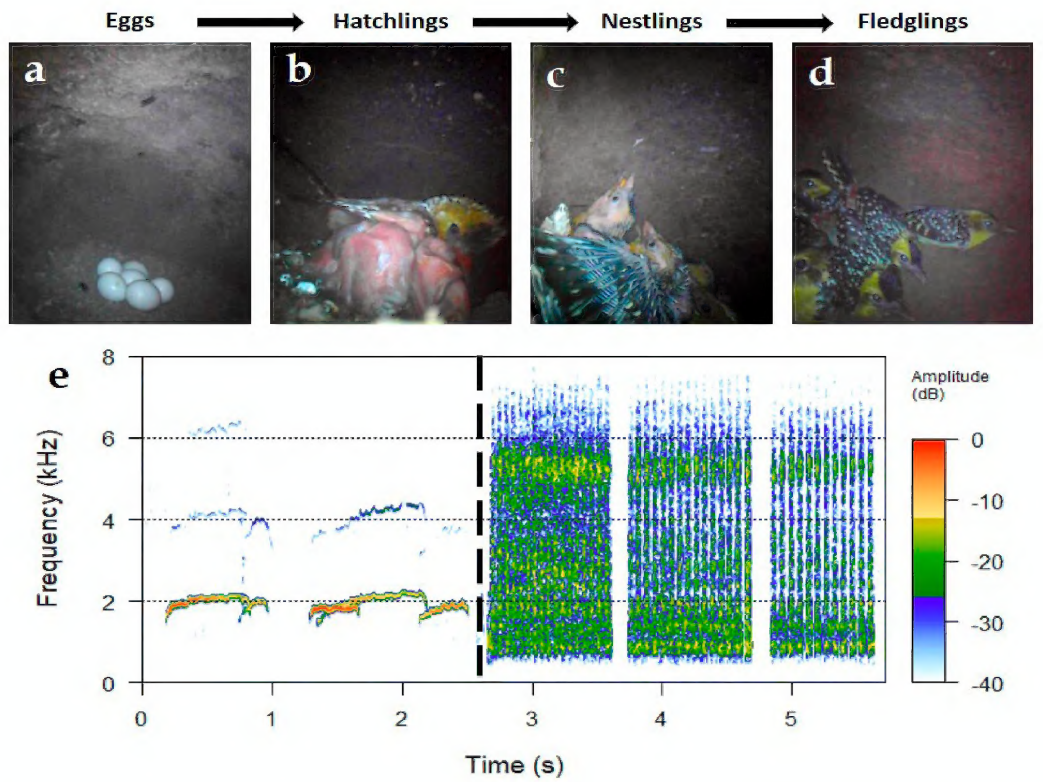

Figure 4. Six eggs at site DS02, laid one per day (a). Hatchlings at site DS08a with an adult present within the cavity (b). Ten-day old nestlings at site DS06 (c). Fledglings about three weeks old at site DS07 (d). Spectrogram of the begging calls of Yellow-breasted Barbet chicks soon after they hatched (left) and few days later (right) (e).

Discussion

Communal roosting

In this study, we found that the Yellow-breasted Barbet lives in pairs or small groups that communally roost within a single cavity, most of the time dug into a steep sandy river bank. Even though it was common to find several cavities at one site, the birds entered a specific cavity to spend the night. The usage of natural cracks and holes within rocky cliffs seems to be more common in the mountainous regions (Mahamoud-Issa, pers. obs). The number of sites and their location did not change over the years of monitoring, suggesting there is a limited number of sites suitable for digging cavities in the studied areas. Hence, habitat saturation due to the limited number of suitable sites might be one of the factors that favour the retention of offspring within their family group. Since we often found one or several individuals that occupied the same site during at least two consecutive years, we suggest that once a pair has established a territory, the birds will occupy and defend their cavity site year-round. The offspring of the breeding pair could delay their dispersal to help their parents raise the next brood within the year. Eventually, one offspring might inherit the site (Kingma 2017, Downing *et al.* 2018). Alternatively, the retention of offspring and the recruitment of newcomers could help the breeding pair to better defend its territory and resources ("group augmentation hypothesis", Kingma 2017). Most of the birds caught in one year were not recaptured in the area the next year. At some point, some individuals should be forced to leave their group due to the absence of breeding opportunity and the lack of space within the cavity. They might disperse over some distance to find a new suitable site. Thus, the group formation might be driven by ecological constraints (a limited amount of suitable roosting and nesting sites) or the harsh life conditions in which alloparental care towards kin-relatives is favoured (Wild & Korb 2017).

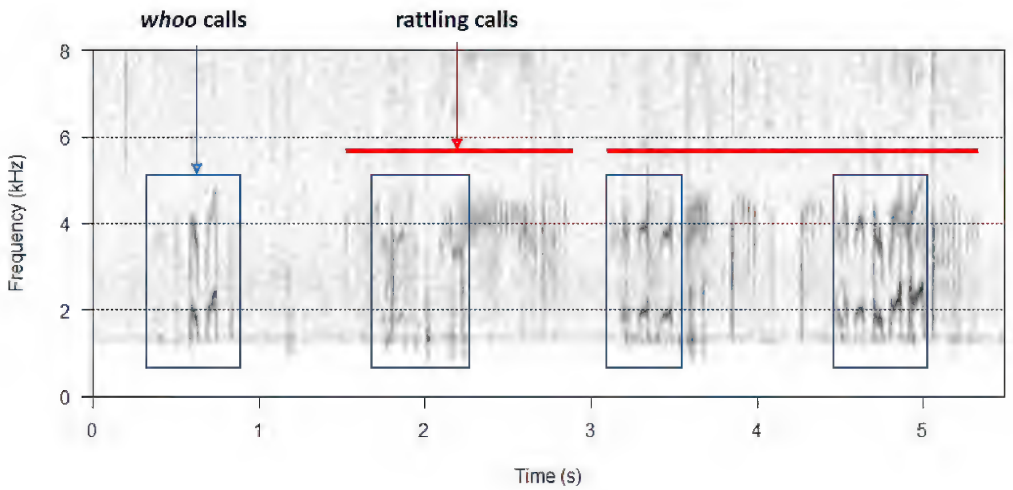

Figure 5. Vocal communication at the cavity. An adult Yellow-breasted Barbet visiting the cavity emitted *whoo* calls (blue rectangles) at the cavity entrance, and a second bird replied with rattling calls from within the cavity (red lines), possibly an adult bird incubating.

Nesting behaviour

In Djibouti, the period of the breeding season was not clear for the species. We found that a first breeding season occurred in September–November 2022. Then, a second breeding season from February to March 2023. These two seasons matched with the change between hot and cool seasons, usually accompanied by rainfall. The timing of breeding of the Yellow-breasted Barbet could be influenced by the temperatures and the amount of rainfall (Mares *et al.* 2017).

We found two consecutive broods within a six-month period, but according to the number of eggs and chicks found in different cavities, the species can lay up to eight eggs in a single cavity (one per day). According to our regular pictures of several nestlings at different stages, we suggested about three weeks for the nestling period and an incubation time more than two weeks. In a closely related species, the Red-and-yellow Barbet, the total incubation and nestling period was estimated as 45–46 days, including 23–24 days for incubation, and at least four broods recorded in a breeding season (de Bont 2009). In the D'Arnaud's Barbet Trachyphonus darnaudii, the mean incubation period was 15.3 days and the mean nestling period was about 28.0 days (Brumm *et al.* 2024). In the Crested Barbet, the incubation period lasts 13–17 days (Short & Horne 2020b). A nesting season for a pair/group of Yellow-breasted Barbets could last six weeks, including incubation time, until fledgling, the number of days could be variable according to the number of eggs laid. Once the young left the cavity, they stayed with the group and went back to the roosting cavity at night.

The group of Yellow-breasted Barbets did not use separate nesting and roosting cavities, all adults slept with the eggs, then with the chicks. At DS05, we observed that the hatchlings were placed in the centre of the cavity while the four adults formed a circle around them. Communal roosting is advantageous for thermoregulation and saving energy (Paquet *et al.* 2016). However, it might also facilitate the spread of parasites such as mites (Sikora *et al.* 2023). Thus, we could expect that big groups provide better thermoregulation for chicks than single pairs, which might increase their survival or accelerate their growth. On the other hand, living in a group could increase the chance of parasite infestation of the brood. The regular communal sand baths we witnessed at the end of the day, before the birds entered their cavity could prevent, or at least limit the spread of parasites within the roosting cavity. Adults that roosted with nestlings were observed in other group breeding barbet species (Grimes 1976, Short & Horne 2001).

Vocal behaviour at the nesting cavity

We found that adult birds vocalized from within the cavity and at the entrance during the nesting season, using *whoo* calls when feeding young and rattling calls similar to those emitted by chicks. A similar behaviour was documented in the Green Barbet that vocalizes around and from within its cavity, especially during a nest relief (Short & Horne 1980). Since *whoo* calls were sometimes recorded immediately after a group vocal display (Mahamoud-Issa *et al.* 2024), we suggest that *whoo* calls serve primarily to attract young for feeding and as intra-group communication between adults during nest reliefs and the incubation period. They might also have a function in affiliative behaviour within the group. For example, using such calls after a group vocal display could reduce the stress of the individuals and reinforce intra-group bonds after a between-group conflict (Radford 2008). The Yellow-breasted Barbet also emits duets and choruses in the vicinity of their roosting site, as well as other types of

close and long-range vocalization (Mahamoud-Issa *et al.* 2024). The question whether a group of barbets use intra-group communication within their cavity even outside the nesting season remains to be investigated.

Possible competition with other species for cavity ownership

In our areas of study, we did not observe any competition between the Yellow-breasted Barbet and the Black-throated Barbet *Tricholaema melanocephala* which uses cavities dug in tree trunks and was present in the areas of study. The Black-throated Barbet sometimes reacts to duet playback of the Red-and-yellow Barbet which sounds very similar to the Yellow-breasted Barbet (Short & Horne 1983). We found a nest of a Hoopoe within a former barbet cavity 15 m from the current nesting cavity of barbets. The Yellow-breasted Barbet might also compete for cavities with the White-throated Bee-eater *Merops albicollis* that migrates to Djibouti to breed in summer. It would be interesting to investigate potential inter-specific competition between the Yellow-breasted Barbet and the Red-and-yellow Barbet where the two species' ranges overlap in Somalia and Ethiopia. The Red-and-yellow Barbet selects the same type of sites to dig roosting and nesting cavities (de Bont 2009, Short & Horne 2020c) and both barbet species are known to occasionally dig holes in human-made structures (Yellow-breasted Barbet in a mud wall: Fry *et al.* 1988, Red-and-yellow Barbet in a concrete wall: de Bont 2009). The Yellow-breasted Barbet is a territorial species that reacts to playback songs of conspecifics (Mahamoud-Issa *et al.* 2023). We wonder whether it could react to the vocalizations of other hole-nesting species which might compete for cavity ownership.

Future investigations

A year-round monitoring study would be useful to determine the total number of broods per year in Djibouti, as well as the exact group breeding strategy. First, regular catching and re-catching sessions of several groups before, during and after each breeding season, with genetic analysis should be conducted. This will help to determine which birds in a group are breeders and non-breeders and whether non-breeders are delayed offspring or recruited newcomers. Second, the role of each group member during the nesting period needs to be clarified. We suggested using a Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT tags) system accompanied by visual observations at the nesting cavity entrance to document the helping effort of each bird during the incubation period and when feeding the young. Finally, the deployment of colour rings and GPS trackers could help to determine when and where most of the birds leave their group and disperse.

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The Birds of the Parc National de la Garamba, République Démocratique du Congo

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Summary

This is an inventory of the bird species known for certain from the Parc National de la Garamba in the north-east of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). It has involved examination of a large, unpublished, collection of specimens, as well as the limited literature and internet resources. A total of 437 species can be considered as confirmed. Many more have been claimed that are likely to be erroneous or for which acceptable documentation is lacking. However, it is clear that the avifauna of this large and important protected area has been insufficiently explored, that many more species can be expected to occur and the status of what is known is fragmentary. Four species represent the first published records for the DRC: Short-toed Snake Eagle *Circaetus gallicus*, Chestnut-backed Sparrow Lark *Eremopterix leucotis*, Turkestan Shrike *Lanius phoenicuroides* and Sahel Bush Sparrow *Gymnoris dentata*. The park is clearly an important winter area for Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra* and several other Palaearctic migrants.

Introduction

The Parc National de la Garamba (Garamba National Park) covers some 5133 km^2, with an additional 9662 km^2 of adjacent hunting areas (*domaines de chasse*), and is situated in the northeastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). It abuts on to South Sudan to the north, and is not far from northwestern Uganda to the east. A detailed description of the park's position and habitats has been presented by D'haen (2023).

Smith (1994) produced the first complete checklist of the birds known from the Parc National de la Garamba from 1982 to 1992, together with notes on their status, based on Kes Smith's personal experience over several years. It contained some 346 species, including observations made by Tommy Pedersen during a flying visit in February 1994 (see Pedersen 1998a). Those treated by Smith as unconfirmed, if still unproven, are not considered further here. Although unpublished, this list was a useful first account, but neither it nor any later publication took into account the exploration of the Garamba undertaken by the de Saeger expedition's survey during 1949–1952 (de Saeger 1954 *et seq.*), which resulted in a collection of over 3000 specimens of some 317 species. Very few of the species reported have ever been mentioned in print.

The Belgian entomologist Henri de Saeger (1925–2014) was the leader of a multi-disciplinary expedition to the Parc National de la Garamba. This was sponsored jointly by the Muséum Royal d'Afrique Centrale, Tervuren (hereafter MRAC) and the Institut Royal des Sciences Naturelles, Bruxelles (IRSNB). The complete results obtained by researchers in various disciplines were published soon after (e.g. de Saeger 1954, 1956; Troupin 1956; Verschuren 1957, 1958), but not the ornithological ones. All

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published parts are available at www.apnc.be/archives/publications/. Jacques Verschuren (1926–2014) undertook most of the vertebrate research. For the ornithological study, he presented a very selective account, and wrote that the specimens had been studied in part by the late René K. Verheyen (1907–1961) of IRSNB, and that it would be finalized and published by his son Rudolf F. Verheyen (Verschuren 1966). This was never done.

This collection of 3122 specimens of birds (de Saeger 1954: 104) was divided equally between the museums of Tervuren and Bruxelles, judging by a MS list of 2774 skins (per A. Reygel, MRAC, 2021); smaller numbers are known to be in the American Museum of Natural History, New York (AMNH) and University Museum of Zoology, Cambridge (CUMZ), presumably the result of exchanges. The only mention of any of these specimens in print would seem to be the few Garamba and Gangala-na-bodio specimens mentioned by Schouteden (1963), some of those that went to MRAC. A map of planned and actual study areas was presented by de Saeger (1954: 62, Fig. 5), the three main areas eventually explored being: Bagbele (valley of the Aka, or Mogbwamu, source of the Nambili) in the west, Ndélélé (Kotshio river) in the east, and in the south near the Garamba/Nalibili confluence. This last locality was some 32 km from the present park headquarters at Nagero, where a camp was established in 1951 and called Mabanga. A map of Garamba was also an annexe to Troupin (1956), and final collecting localities were detailed by de Saeger (1956: 8). A gazetteer of localities mentioned here is presented below (Appendix 2).

Prior to the de Saeger expedition this area of the Congo/Sudan border seems to have been touched on only by Cuthbert Christy (1863–1932) who collected specimens on Mt Baginzi during his sleeping sickness investigations (Sclater & Mackworth-Praed 1918–1920). This hill is on the northern edge of the Azande hunting area. Subsequently, in the 1940s and 1950s a number of specimens were collected at Gangala-na-bodio (an elephant domestication centre), in particular by Claude Cornet d'Elzius (1926–2009), Xavier Misonne (1923–2007) and Paul Pierret (1929–2022). Brief visits were paid by the ornithologists James Paul Chapin (1889–1964) and Henri Eugene Alphonse Hubert Schouteden (1881–1972).

In addition to examination of the large, unpublished, collection of specimens from the de Saeger expedition, the limited literature and internet resources, plus a few published reports, have been taken into account. Subsequent to the Smith (1992) report, observations come from Posse & Dieudonné (2013) who undertook surveys using mist-nets, and provided some data concerning relative bird species abundance captured in the Dungu and Garamba riverine belt, adjacent savanna and *Papyrus* swamps. In April–May 2021 some ornithological training was given to park staff by Joe Kelsey and Lee Gutteridge. Mathias D'haen was based in the Garamba 2016–2019, where he studied the Kordofan Giraffe *Giraffa camelopardalis antiquorum*: he has published some of his more important ornithological observations (D'haen 2023), and has made available a useful MS account of his unpublished records (quoted hereafter as D'haen 2021), although not all are accepted here. Internet sites have been visited, e.g. observers have submitted details of 173 species to eBird (examined 3 September 2024), some of which are clearly incorrect, and they and other records from un-refereed sources that are probably in error are not considered further here.

Appendix 1 presents a list of all 437 species accepted here, together with numbered references to relevant sources, while those warranting more detailed discussion are treated below. Mention is also made of the observations and specimens collected by Chapin (1932–1954) during several long spells spent at Faradje, in the vicinity of the Garamba protected area (see also additional species from extralimital localities below). The nomenclature and order used follow Gill *et al.* 2024.

Comments on selected species

Hartlaub's Duck *Pteronetta hartlaubii*

Specimens were collected by Cornet d'Elzius at Gangala-na-bodio, 1 January and 7 March (Schouteden 1963). There have been no subsequent reports, and its occurrence may be only irregular at its northeastern limit of distribution.

Western Crested Guineafowl *Guttera verreauxi*

The nominate subspecies (ex-*sethsmithi*) was collected at Gangala-na-bodio by Pierret (Schouteden 1963). The species was reported in riparian forest in the Garamba (Posse & Dieudonné 2013), but with no details, and there have been no subsequent records.

Long-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus climacurus*

Noted all months and a nest in March, but perhaps in part an intra-African migrant. Three collected November are of the pale nominate subspecies, as were single specimens from Faradje in November and February (Chapin 1939). However, the majority have been attributed to the resident *sclateri* (Louette 1990, Schouteden 1963), as were numerous specimens from Faradje (Chapin 1939).

Slender-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus clarus*

A bird captured by Laurent Esselen and Tommy Pedersen at Nagero 17 February 1994 was photographed (Fig. 1). This seems to be only the third DRC record of this eastern Africa species, the first being from Lake Ishwa 18 December and Angodia 14 March (Louette 1990, Schouteden 1951–19-52).

Figure 1. Slender-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus clarus*. Photo: Laurent Esselen.

Standard-winged Nightjar *Caprimulgus longipennis*

Clearly a breeding visitor, several observations November to April, but records June and July (Smith 1994) need confirmation.

Alpine Swift *Tachymarptis melba*

There are records from the Garamba area December–April, including five on 18 February 1994 (Pedersen 1998a), and one in May. Probably all are Palaearctic migrants, as 14 specimens of nominate *melba* were collected at Faradje, 22 December to 14 January, by Chapin (1939).

Thick-billed Cuckoo *Pachycoccyx audeberti*

Dated specimens collected Garamba and Gangala-na-bodio are 23 November, 16 January and 6 March (Benson & Irwin 1972), and Baginzi Mt in March (Sclater & Mackworth-Praed 1919: 642). They are likely to be resident.

Black Cuckoo *Cuculus clamosus*
Recorded in most months of the year (Smith 1994). Specimens have been attributed to the resident forest subspecies *gabonensis* (*jacksoni*) (Chapin 1939, Schouteden 1963).

European Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*
One collected Garamba on 2 December was attributed to the eastern subspecies *arenicola*, as was a specimen from Avakubi 28 October (Chapin 1939).

Bruce's Green Pigeon *Treron waalia*
One collected Garamba (IRSNB), and seen between Garamba and Faradje (Chapin 1939). This is near the southern limit of the species' range.

Spotted Crake *Porzana porzana*
Reported from Gangala-na-bodio, an undated specimen (Schouteden 1963).

Spotted Thick-knee *Burhinus capensis*
There is a specimen in IRSNB dated 10 January 1952, the first known from northeastern DRC. The nearest report otherwise is from Murchison (Kabalega) Falls in Uganda (Carswell *et al.* 2005).

Eurasian Stone-curlew *Burhinus oedicnemus*
Palaearctic visitor reported December–March, with 2 certain specimens, dated 2 January and 15 February. Large groups may occur, as in Ethiopia (Ash & Atkins 2009), as 20 were reported seen together 8 February 1996 (Pedersen 1998a).

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*
Palaearctic migrant, several reports dated February, including 12 on the Garamba river, 14–15 February 1994 (Pedersen 1998a).

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*
Reported from Garamba (11–12 February) and Faradje (September) (Chapin 1939, Pedersen 1998a).

Black-winged Pratincole *Glareola nordmanni*
A Palaearctic passage migrant, with numbers passing through northwards, extreme dates 31 March to 15 April. A specimen was collected in Gangala-na-bodio (3°41′N 29°08′E) on 10 April (Schouteden 1963), and eight collected on 3 April at Faradje, where once recorded on southward passage, 22 September (Chapin 1939). Often numerous, with more than 100 hunting termites in a mixed flock with Common Swifts *Apus apus* and Northern Carmine Bee-eaters *Merops nubicus* on 7 April 2019 (D'haen 2023).

Little Bittern *Botaurus minutus*
Three specimens were collected by the de Saeger mission, two resident *payesii* and one Palaearctic *minutus* (dated 12 April 1952). Only *payesii* was found at Faradje, where Chapin (1932) collected several August to November.

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*
Recorded all months except August and October. Some eastern Palaearctic birds may occur (a Romanian bird was recovered in Mozambique (Underhill *et al.* 1999).

White-backed Night Heron *Calherodius leuconotus*

There is an adult female specimen collected by the de Saeger mission 9 April 1951(*IRSNB*, weight 550 g). This is the only Garamba record, but five specimens were collected at Faradje in March, August and October (Chapin 1932).

African Cuckoo-Hawk *Aviceda cuculoides*

The two collected by de Saeger are nominate *cuculoides*, which was the form collected between Faradje and Dungu by Chapin (1932), rather than the forest form *batesi*, which he obtained no nearer than Rungu.

Short-toed Snake Eagle *Circaetus gallicus*

A specimen collected in the Bagbele region, Garamba on 8 November 1950 was attributed by R. Verheyen to *gallicus*, and is a sub-adult (A. Reygel *in litt.* 2021). This appears to be the first DRC record, the nearest certain report otherwise is from Juba, South Sudan (Nikolaus 1989).

Beaudouin's Snake Eagle *Circaetus beaudouini*

Either this species or Short-toed has been reported seen regularly in December–April and June–July, with "juveniles" found in February, but in the absence of photographs their relative status is unclear. There is a specimen of Beaudouin's from Faradje, collected by Hutsebaut, 23 November (Schouteden 1963).

Black-chested Snake Eagle *Circaetus pectoralis*

There were observations in Garamba in February 1994 and February 1996 (Demey *et al.* 2000, Pedersen 1998a). Perhaps seasonally sympatric with Beaudouin's Snake Eagle.

Ayres's Hawk Eagle *Hieraaetus ayresii*

Seen Bagunda Mt 15 February 1994 and Garamba/Aka rivers 16 February 1994 (Pedersen 1998a).

Steppe Eagle *Aquila nipalensis*

Cornet d'Elzius collected a specimen of this Palaearctic migrant at Gangala-na-bodio on 3 April (Schouteden 1963). Apparently winters in some numbers in the area, as five were collected at Faradje, 2 January to 29 March (Chapin 1932).

Levant Sparrowhawk *Tachyspiza brevipes*

This Palaearctic migrant is known from a single specimen collected at Gangala-na-bodio on 2 March 1955 (Wattel 1966), the only record from DRC.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

Palaearctic birds occur, but are probably overlooked, as there are few certain records for February (Pedersen 1998a) and December and March (D'haen 2021).

Yellow-billed Kite *Milvus aegyptius*

The subspecies *parasitus* is numerous and widespread, believed to be resident, although Chapin (1932) reported flocks (presumed to be of this subspecies) moving south in the Garamba area, June to August. Nests were found at Garamba in February–March, including one with a nestling and another with two eggs, 22 February (Chapin 1932).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

The Eurasian migrant Steppe Buzard *Buteo buteo vulpinus* has been recorded in November and 15 February to April, on passage to and from winter quarters further south.

Pearl-spotted Owlet *Glaucidium perlatum*

Seen and photographed nesting in a garden in Garamba, April 2021 (Lee Gutteridge *in litt.*). The nearest locality seems to be in the West Nile district of Uganda (Jackson & Sclater 1938).

Greyish Eagle Owl *Bubo cinerascens*

Specimens collected at Garamba (de Saeger 1954) and Gangala-na-bodio (Schouteden 1963) confirm the local population to be of this form, rather than Spotted Eagle Owl *B. africanus*. Hybrids and a mixed pair are known from Kenya (D.A. Turner *in litt.* 2024).

Narina Trogon *Apaloderma narina*

Two were collected Garamba, one of them dated 5 December (de Saeger); these are nominate *narina* as was one collected near Faradje 4 October (Chapin 1939), and not the forest form *brachyurum*. These are the only records, but the species is perhaps overlooked.

Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

Common in grassland savanna, recorded months October–April, also seen in June. Of more than 20 hoopoes collected at Garamba, Mt Baginzi and Faradje, all but one are apparently of the dark subspecies *waibeli*. The one certain record of nominate *epops* was collected Garamba on 26 December (weight 45 g). Schouteden (1963) reported African Hoopoe *Upupa africana* from Gangala-na-bodio, north of its usual range (southwards from central Kenya), and that this species occurs as a migrant is in need of confirmation. There is, in fact, little justification for granting specific status to *africana* (*contra* Gill *et al.* 2024), as there are only minor plumage differences, contiguous ranges, and a lack of vocal differences (Dowsett & Dowsett-Lemaire 1993).

Black-casqued Hornbill *Ceratogymna atrata*

Collected by Misonne at Gangala-na-bodio (Schouteden 1963) and there is a sight record in February (D'haen 2021). This is near the northeasterly limit of range, in South Sudan (Aloma plateau: Nikolaus 1989).

Broad-billed Roller *Eurystomus glaucurus*

At Garamba the subspecies *afer* is a common visitor February–October, being absent most of the dry season. A specimen of nominate *glaucurus*, a migrant from the Malagasy region which winters in eastern Africa, was collected at Gangala-na-bodio 9 April by Misonne (Schouteden 1963).

Grey-headed (Chestnut-bellied) Kingfisher *Halcyon leucocephala*

Common breeding migrant with numerous nominate *leucocephala* collected (Chapin 1939, Schouteden 1963, Sclater & Mackworth-Praed 1919). Extreme dates are 5 November–9 May, with a nest found in March.

Woodland (Senegal) Kingfisher ***Halcyon senegalensis***
Common in wooded savanna, apparently resident, with several collected (nominate *senegalensis*: Chapin 1939).

African Pygmy Kingfisher ***Ispidina picta***
Locally common resident, recorded most months (nominate *pictus*: Chapin 1939).

White-throated Bee-eater ***Merops albicollis***
Non-breeding Intra-African migrant, common at times, with extreme dates 25 October to 15 June, when last stragglers were heard passing (Chapin 1939).

Blue-cheeked Bee-eater ***Merops persicus***
Uncommon winter visitor, December–14 April, with one collected 3 July, an exceptional date (Chapin 1939). Specimens collected by the de Saeger mission and Chapin were attributed to Palaearctic nominate *persicus*, rather than the Saharo-Sahelian *chrysocercus*. Olive Bee-eater *M. superciliosus* occurs in eastern Africa as a non-breeding migrant from Madagascar and East African islands, roughly May–August: it might be expected to occur in the Garamba area, as it is known as far north as neighbouring Uganda (Kabalega Falls: Britton 1980).

Black-breasted Barbet ***Pogonornis rolleti***
Collected by Cuthbert Christy from Mt Baginzi, on the South Sudanese border (Sclater & Mackworth-Praed 1919: 634). Listed from Garamba, without comment, by Posse & Dieudonné (2013), but no other records.

Least Honeyguide ***Indicator exilis***
There is a specimen from Gangala-na-bodio (Schouteden 1963).

Lesser Honeyguide ***Indicator minor***
Collected Garamba (de Saeger), a specimen attributed to *riggenbachi*, and sightings presumably refer to this savanna subspecies. One from Gangala-na-bodio is listed as the forest subspecies *conirostris* (Schouteden 1963), but confirmation is desirable, as that form is otherwise known from no nearer than Wago mountain, Lendu plateau (Schouteden 1951-52) and in Uganda (Budongo Forest: Friedmann & Williams 1973).

Red-throated Wryneck ***Jynx ruficollis***
One photographed at Nagero 11 March (D'haen 2023) and a specimen collected 12 March by Misonne at Gangala-na-bodio (Schouteden 1963). Reports of European Wryneck *J. torquata* in riparian forest along the Garamba river by Posse & Dieudonné (2013) are unconfirmed.

Brown-eared Woodpecker ***Pardipicus caroli***
Known only from a specimen collected Gangala-na-bodio (Schouteden 1963).

Nubian Woodpecker ***Campethera nubica***
One collected Garamba 15 February 1950 (*IRSNB*). This is an extension of range from the Nile region of north-west Uganda.

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Clearly nominate Palaearctic birds winter in numbers in the area, with more than 20 collected Garamba, Faradje and Dungu, 30 October to 12 March (Chapin 1932, de Saeger; Fig. 2). It has been claimed that the local subspecies *rufescens* is an uncommon visitor, seen in January, February, May and September, but further data are needed to confirm this.

Figure 2. Common Kestrel *Falco t. tinnunculus.* Photo: Pierre Devillers, IRSNB.

African Hobby *Falco cuvierii*

There are sightings and six specimens from Garamba, including Baginzi Mt and Gangala-na-bodio (Schouteden 1963, Sclater & Mackworth-Praed 1919, de Saeger), dated March and one June.

Lanner Falcon *Falco biarmicus*

Uncommon visitor, seen in January, February and April. Two specimens are attributed to the Afrotropical subspecies *abyssinicus* (de Saeger).

Red-eyed (Black-shouldered) Puffback *Dryoscopus senegalensis*

Collected Gangala-na-bodio (Schouteden 1963) and reportedly fairly common in Garamba (D'haen 2021). This is the northeastern limit of distribution.

Red-shouldered Cuckooshrike *Campephaga phoenicea*

Fairly common, apparently resident, as there are records for all months except April and August.

African Golden Oriole *Oriolus auratus*

Nominate *auratus* is fairly common, with dated records all months except August and September.

Velvet-mantled Drongo *Dicrurus modestus*

Specimens from Garamba (de Saeger collection) are at the species' northeastern limit of range; they would presumably be of the subspecies *coracinus.*

African Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone viridis*

A common breeding species. Most specimens collected Garamba are attributed to the sedentary subspecies *speciosa,* recorded all months (Chapin 1953, Schouteden 1963). Northern *ferreti* are known as migrants from Garamba, Baginzi and Faradje (December, March–April and July), as is the southern migrant *plumbeiceps* (April–July: de Saeger).

Lesser Grey Shrike *Lanius minor*

A passage migrant, seen April–May. Dowsett (1971) documented very heavy northward migration through northeastern DRC, late March to early May, with far fewer moving south October and November. A report from Garamba in July (Smith 1994) lacks details.

Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator*

Fairly common winter visitor, 24 November–April. A specimen from Garamba (28 November) is of the subspecies *niloticus*, as is one from Gangala-na-bodio dated 27 November (Schouteden 1963).

Isabelline Shrike *Lanius isabellinus*

Fairly common winter visitor (D'haen 2023), extreme dates 30 October to 9 April.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

Rare winter visitor, with few dated records: one seen 12 February 1996, a specimen from Gangala-na-bodio on the late date of 28 May (Schouteden 1963) and a specimen collected by de Saeger 21 November.

Red-tailed (Turkestan) Shrike *Lanius phoenicuroides*

A female specimen 27 December 1951, identity confirmed by P. Devillers IRSNB (Fig. 3). This is the first certain record for DR Congo (cf. D'haen 2023), but this Palaearctic migrant winters widely in parts of East Africa.

Rufous-rumped Lark *Pinarocorys erythropygia*

There are dated records from Garamba 22 and 23 November and 6 February to 20 March, possibly on passage, while Chapin (1953) collected an immature at Faradje 2 May. This is near the species' southern limit of range.

Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark *Eremopterix leucotis*

A male collected Garamba 8 March 1952 (IRSNB). The nearest is from Kudurma, South Sudan collected November by Emin, subspecies *melanocephala* (Chapin 1953). New to DRC.

Simple Greenbul *Chlorocichla simplex*

Collected at Gangala-na-bodio by Misonne (Schouteden 1963), at the northeastern range limit.

Yellow-whiskered Greenbul *Eurillas latirostris*

Collected at Gangala-na-bodio by Misonne (Schouteden 1963).

Figure 3. Red-tailed (Turkestan) Shrike *Lanius phoenicuroides.* Photo: Pierre Devillers, IRSNB.

Black Saw-wing *Psalidoprocne pristoptera*
Subspecies *mangbettorum* is common at times in grassland savanna, perhaps resident, but not recorded November and January. Collected Garamba 2 June (de Saeger) and Gangala-na-bodio 10 and 23 June (Schouteden 1963).

Banded Martin *Neophedina cincta*
Once Garamba, no details (Pedersen 1998b).

Western House Martin *Delichon urbicum*
Said to be encountered regularly in small numbers, but the only dated report is April (Smith 1994).

African Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis melanocrissus*
The subspecies *emini* is reported from Garamba as an uncommon visitor, seen in February and May (Pedersen 1998a).

Preuss's Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon preussi*
Observed twice: on 23 February 2018 at 3°50′ N 29°26′ E and on 23 September 2018 at the Nagero headquarters, both times in a mixed group of hirundines (D'haen 2021). Three were collected by Chapin (1953) on 1 June near Gangala-na-bodio. No breeding colony has yet been found for what is an isolated population at the northeastern limit of the species' range.

Common Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*
Palaearctic winter visitor, recorded dates 9 November to 5 February, with several in song in February (Pedersen 1998a). Chapin (1953) reported both subspecies, nominate *scirpaceus* and eastern *fuscus* from Faradje.

Eastern Olivaceous Warbler *Iduna pallida*
Six collected by de Saeger (8 November to 3 April) and one dated 1 December (Schouteden 1963) were attributed to the subspecies *elaeica*. Several sight records in February, and small numbers noted Dungu riparian forest.

Winding Cisticola *Cisticola marginatus*
Specimens collected Garamba (Chapin 1953, Schouteden 1963, de Saeger) are attributed to the subspecies *nyansae*.

White-chinned Prinia *Schistolais leucopogon*
Collected Gangala-na-bodio (Schouteden 1963), and said to be uncommon in Dungu riparian forest, Garamba.

Buff-bellied Warbler *Phyllolais pulchella*
The only record is of three seen at Nagero Camp, 14 February 1994 (Pedersen 1998a), but Chapin (1953: 277) collected several at Faradje.

Green- (Grey-)backed Camaroptera *Camaroptera brachyura*
Common, specimens of the subspecies *abessinica* collected Gangala-na-Bodio (Schouteden 1963) and Faradje (Chapin 1953).

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*
Dated records are 13 September to 14 December, probably on southward passage.

Common Whitethroat *Curruca communis*
Reported as scarce in grassland savanna (D'haen 2021, Posse & Dieudonné 2013), but no dated records.

Spotted Thrush-Babbler *Illadopsis turdina*
There are specimens of this easily-overlooked babbler from Gangala-na-bodio (Schouteden 1963) and Baginzi Mt (Sclater & Mackworth-Praed 1918: 695).

Wattled Starling *Creatophora cinerea*
A scarce visitor in December (D'haen 2021).

Bronze-tailed Starling *Lamprotornis chalcurus*
Uncommon visitor, seen January and February. Collected (subspecies *emini*) Gangala-na-bodio, October and November (Schouteden 1963) and Faradje in February, March and November (when breeding, Chapin 1954).

Splendid Starling *Lamprotornis splendidus*
Specimens of nominate *splendidus* were collected in November at Gangala-na-bodio (Schouteden 1963) and Faradje (Chapin 1954), and Baginzi Mt in March (Sclater & Mackworth-Praed 1918: 431). Prigogine & Benson (1980) showed that the great majority of specimens from northeastern DRC were dated March to September.

Purple Starling *Lamprotornis purpureus*
Evidently very uncommon, with no sight reports, but Chapin (1954) collected a specimen (*amethystinus*) in Garamba on 10 May, and considered it scarce in the region. Schouteden (1963) listed it from Faradje.

Violet-backed Starling *Cinnyricinclus leucogaster*
There are records throughout the year, and numerous nominate *leucogaster* have been collected, with one specimen of *verreauxi* (migrant from further south) on 10 February (Schouteden 1963). Traylor (1971) had suggested that the species was essentially a winter visitor to northeastern DRC, but this view has to be revised.

White-browed Forest Flycatcher *Fraseria cinerascens*
Collected Gangala-na-bodio by Pierret (Schouteden 1963), the most easterly record of this species.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*
Certain dated records 2–16 November and 20–29 March, with Faradje observations 23 September–17 October (Chapin 1953). Perhaps only on passage, although Smith (1994) gave a single record, December.

Gambaga Flycatcher *Muscicapa gambagae*
One collected Garamba by the de Saeger mission. Apparently rare near the southern limit of its range.

Swamp Flycatcher *Muscicapa aquatica*
Listed by D'haen (2021), reported as scarce in *Papyrus* swamps and gallery forest (Posse & Dieudonné 2013) as at Faradje, where three collected (Chapin 1953).

Common Nightingale ***Luscinia megarhynchos***
Few records, extreme dates 10 November (Chapin 1953) and 25 March (Schouteden 1963).

Semicollared Flycatcher ***Ficedula semitorquata***
An adult male in breeding plumage was photographed at Nagero on 4 March 2018 (D'haen 2023), the first confirmed record for DRC.

Collared Flycatcher ***Ficedula albicollis***
Said to be scarce, a specimen collected Garamba 7 March (de Saeger), seen in March (D'haen 2021) and a male collected Faradje 27 September (Chapin 1953).

Common Rock Thrush ***Monticola saxatilis***
Four collected Garamba (dated 8 January to 8 February, de Saeger), two seen near Bagunda Mt 15 February 1994 (Pedersen 1998a) and noted December and January (D'haen 2021).

Mocking Cliff Chat ***Thamnolaea cinnamomeiventris***
Collected Gangala-na-bodio by Misonne (Schouteden 1963), subspecies *subrufipennis*.

Isabelline Wheatear ***Oenanthe isabellina***
One seen near Bagunda Mt 15 February 1994 (Smith 1994, Pedersen 1998a) and listed for December (D'haen 2021).

Violet-tailed Sunbird ***Anthreptes aurantius***
One photographed by D'haen (2023) on the Dungu river at Nagero, an important extension of known range eastwards from the Gurba river, where obtained by Boyd Alexander (Schouteden 1963).

Pygmy Sunbird ***Hedydipna platura***
Locally common visitor, extreme dates 23 December to 24 March, with a single record (specimen) Gangala-na-bodio, 22 July (Chapin 1954, Schouteden 1963).

Olive Sunbird ***Cyanomitra olivacea***
There are specimens (subspecies *cephaelis*) collected Dedegwa, Garamba, 21 May (MRAC) and Baginzi Mt, March (Sclater & Mackworth-Praed 1918: 621). Sight records from riparian forest on the Dungu river (Posse & Dieudonné 2013).

Green-throated Sunbird ***Chalcomitra rubescens***
Small numbers, including a specimen (nominate subspecies) from Gangala-na-bodio (Schouteden 1963).

Palestine Sunbird ***Cinnyris osea***
Three collected by the de Saeger mission, subspecies *decorsei*. Chapin (1954) found it to be a migrant at Faradje, absent most of the rainy season after breeding, and present October to February.

Sahel Bush Sparrow *Gymnoris dentata*

A pair was photographed 16 April 2021 in woodland near the bridge over the Dungu by Lee Gutteridge (Fig 4). This is the first record for DRC, an extension of range from north-western Uganda (Koboko region: Carswell *et al.* 2005).

Figure 4. Sahel Bush Sparrow *Gymnoris dentata.* Photo: Lee Gutteridge.

Thick-billed (Grosbeak) Weaver *Amblyospiza albifrons*

Six specimens attributed to the subspecies *saturata* were collected by the de Saeger mission, and Chapin (1954) found small numbers in the Faradje area.

Baglafecht Weaver *Ploceus baglafecht*

Seen at Nagero in February 1994 (Pedersen 1998a), and collected Faradje, subspecies *eremobius* (Schouteden 1963).

Black-necked Weaver *Ploceus nigricollis*

Frequent in riparian forest on the Dungu river, in small numbers. Also, specimens (nominate subspecies) from Gangala-na-bodio (Schouteden 1963) and Faradje (Chapin 1954).

Orange Weaver *Ploceus aurantius*

Scarce resident in *Papyrus*, listed by D'haen (2021) for several months and photographed by Lee Gutteridge (*in litt.* 2021). The nearest locality is Dungu (Chapin 1954).

Heuglin's Masked Weaver *Ploceus heuglini*

Seen wooded savanna in May, nests reported Garamba March and not uncommon around Faradje (Chapin 1954). The species is very scarce in DRC, and only in the northeast.

Vitelline Masked Weaver *Ploceus vitellinus*

Reported to be uncommon in wooded savanna, May and July. The species is otherwise not claimed from Uelle, nearest records being from South Sudan (Nikolaus 1987).

Vieillot's Black Weaver *Ploceus nigerrimus*

Fairly common wooded savanna. Also Gangala-na-bodio (Schouteden 1963).

Red-headed Quelea *Quelea erythrops*

Common visitor, July–September. Also seen in February, in non-breeding plumage. Collected Garamba, undated specimens (de Saeger), and one 21 Sep at Gangala-na-bodio (Schouteden 1963).

Northern Red Bishop *Euplectes franciscanus*

Collected Baginzi Mt (Sclater & Mackworth-Praed 1918: 45) and reported to be quite common in grassland savanna, with breeding plumage appearing in June.

Black-and-white Mannikin *Spermestes bicolor*
Specimens, subspecies *poensis*, collected Gangala-na-bodio (Schouteden 1963).

Locust Finch *Paludipasser locustella*
Several *uelensis* collected Garamba (June) and Faradje (January, March) (Chapin 1954).

Bar-breasted Firefinch *Lagonosticta rufopicta*
Common riparian bush along the Garamba river, and collected (subspecies *lateritia*) Gangala-na-bodio (Schouteden 1963).

Jambandu Indigobird *Vidua raricola*
Collected Faradje (Payne 2004). Its host is Orange-breasted Waxbill *Amandava subflava*, common in Garamba.

Wilson's Indigobird *Vidua wilsoni*
Collected Gangala-na-bodio (Payne 1973, 2004 & Schouteden 1963). Its host is Bar-breasted Firefinch *Lagonosticta rufopicta*, common in Garamba.

Cameroon Indigobird *Vidua camerunensis*
There are specimens from Garamba (Nagero), Gangala-na-bodio and Faradje (Payne 1973, 2004), the most easterly for the species. It has several reported hosts, of which African Firefinch *Lagonosticta rubricata*, Black-bellied Firefinch *L. rara*, Dybowski's Twinspot *Euschistospiza dybowskii* and Brown Twinspot *Clytospiza monteiri* all occur in Garamba. Some 21 specimens obtained by the de Saeger expedition (10 IRSNB, 11 MRAC) were attributed by Verheyen to Village Indigobird *V. chalybeata*, but they may have been misidentified: that species is unknown in the Uelle and its host Red-billed Firefinch *Lagonosticta senegala* is of uncertain status in the Garamba area. Smith (1994) and Pedersen (1998a) considered observations in all months to be in need of confirmation, and D'haen (2021) listed it only once.

Cuckoo-finch (Parasitic Weaver) *Anomalospiza imberbis*
In addition to six collected Garamba by the de Saeger team, a male was obtained at Faradje by Chapin on 18 October (1954). Its hosts are Cisticolidae, and these localities are an extension of distribution from South Sudan (Kajo-Kadji: Nikolaus 1987, specimen collected by A.L. Butler, in the collection of the Cambridge University Zoology Museum).

Western Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*
Regular on the edge of Dungu riparian forest as a winter visitor, 27 October to 3 April in small numbers. Fifteen collected Garamba (de Saeger), subspeciess *flava* (the most frequent), *feldegg* and *thunbergi*.

Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus*
Collected Garamba 21 December (de Saeger), and seen in February 1994 (Pedersen 1998a).

Rejected records

The following species were listed in the reports of D'haen (2021) and/or Posse & Dieudonné (2013). Some seem unlikely (e.g. forest species) or are extralimital, and none is considered further in the absence of confirmatory details or further reports.

Square-tailed (Mozambique) Nightjar *Caprimulgus fossii*, Red-thighed Sparrowhawk *Tachyspiza erythropus*, Ruff *Calidris pugnax*, Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica*, Ring-necked (Cape Turtle) Dove *Streptopelia capicola*, Ross's Turaco *Tauraco rossae*, Marsh Owl *Asio capensis*, Blue-breasted Bee-eater *Merops variegatus*, European Roller *Coracias garrulus*, Eastern Dwarf Hornbill *Horizocerus granti*, Piping Hornbill *Bycanistes fistulator*, Eastern Yellow-billed Barbet *Trachyphonus purpuratus*, Yellow-crested Woodpecker *Chloropicus xantholophus*, Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*, Red-throated Rock Martin *Ptyonoprogne rufigula*, White-throated Blue Swallow *Hirundo nigrita*, African (Grassland) Pipit *Anthus cinnamomeus*, Richard's Pipit *A. richardi*, Slender-billed Greenbul *Stelgidillas gracilirostris*, Spotted Greenbul *Ixonotus guttatus*, Common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*, Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*, Grey-headed Batis *Batis orientalis*, Tiny Sunbird *Cinnyris minullus*, Orange-tufted Sunbird *C. bouvieri*, Superb Sunbird *C. superbus*, Western Black-headed Oriole *Oriolus brachyrhynchus*, Black-winged Oriole *O. nigripennis*, Narrow-tailed Starling *Poeoptera lugubris*, Lesser Masked Weaver *Ploceus intermedius*, Cardinal Quelea *Quelea cardinalis*, Jameson's Antpecker *Parmoptila jamesoni*, Red-billed Firefinch *Lagonosticta senegala*, Village Indigobird *Vidua chalybeata*, Brimstone Canary *Crithagra sulphurata*.

A number of species reported by Pedersen (1998a, b, 2021) from the Garamba area lack confirmation.

Blue-billed (Hottentot) Teal *Spatula hottentota*, African Goshawk *Aerospiza tachiro*, African Piculet *Verreauxia africana*, Meyer's Parrot *Poicephalus meyeri*, African Dwarf Kingfisher *Ispidina lecontei*, Bearded Woodpecker *Chloropicus namaquus*, Olive-tree Warbler *Hippolais olivetorum*, Black-throated Wattle-eye *Platysteira peltata*, Black-backed Cisticola *Cisticola eximius*, Rattling Cisticola *C. chiniana*, Black-lored Babbler *Turdoides sharpei*, Purple-banded Sunbird *Cinnyris bifasciatus*.

Niam-niam Parrot *Poicephalus crassus*

Collar (2024) has pointed out that there is no evidence to support a record from the Garamba area.

Little Rush Warbler *Bradypterus baboecala*

Although reported from the Sudan border "around Garamba N.P." (Pedersen 1998b), details are lacking. This might refer to the Highland Rush Warbler *B. centralis*, of which Chapin (1953: 431) collected several at Faradje.

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*

Pedersen (1998a) listed two specimens from Garamba, dated 9 November 1951 and 3 January 1952. These are de Saeger specimens in MRAC, and two others (now in IRSNB) were collected during the same period, being dated 27 November 1951 and 5 February 1952. The IRSNB specimens were examined by Françoise Dowsett-Lemaire (Pierre Devillers *in litt.* 2021) and considered to be Common Reed Warblers *A. scirpaceus*. It is best to consider all four birds as Common Reed Warblers, which (unlike Marsh Warbler) winters commonly in the region (Dowsett-Lemaire & Dowsett 1987).

Cassin's Flycatcher *Muscicapa cassini*

Reported to occur on the Dundu river, where scarce (D'haen 2021, Posse 2013), but it has not been possible to obtain convincing details, and as it and Swamp Flycatcher *M.*

aquatica are frequently confused in the field, its presence in Garamba should ideally be confirmed.

Baka Indigobird *Vidua larvaticola*

Listed from Faradje by Payne (1982), but misidentified and not repeated by Payne (2004).

The following species listed by Smith (1994) are erroneous

Black-backed Puffback *Dryoscopus cubla*, Grey Sunbird *Cyanomitra veroxii*, Crested Malimbe *Malimbus malimbicus*.

Additional species from extralimital localities

The following species so far unreported from Garamba were collected at Faradje (Chapin 1932-54, Schouteden 1963).

African Pygmy Goose *Nettapus auritus*, Red-chested Flufftail *Sarothrura rufa*, Chestnut-headed Flufftail *S. lugens*, Streaky-breasted Flufftail *S. boehmi*, White-fronted Plover *Charadrius marginatus*, Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*, African Snipe *Gallinago nigripennis*, Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*, White-winged Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus* and Red-tailed Bristlebill *Bleda syndactylus*.

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Appendix 1.

List of birds of Parc National de la Garamba, Democratic Republic of Congo

Numbers of specimens in the de Saeger collection are shown, divided between IRSNB (Institut Royal des Sciences Naturelles, Bruxelles) and MRAC (Musée Royal d'Afrique Centrale, Tervuren). References that are primary sources for records additional to the de Saeger list are numbered: 1 Chapin (1939-54); 2 D'haen (2021); 3 Gutteridge (MS); 4 Pedersen (1998a); 5 Posse & Dieudonné (2013); 6 Schouteden (1963); 7 Smith (1994); 8 Verschuren (1964); 9 Payne (2004); 10 Sclater & Mackworth-Praed (1918-20); 11 D'haen (2023); 12 Lynes (1930).

Abbreviations used: Res (known or suspected resident), AM (intra-African migrant), PM (Palaearctic migrant), V (vagrant, irregular), juv/imm (bird in non-adult plumage), br breeding.

Species	Status	de Saeger coll.		References
		IRSNB	MRAC	
Anatidae				
White-faced Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna viduata*	Res, most months	2	2	2 4 7 8
Fulvous Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna bicolor*	AV Mar	-	-	4 7
Spur-winged Goose *Plectropterus gambensis*	AM? Dec-Jan	-	-	4 7 8
Knob-billed Duck *Sarkidiornis melanotos*	AM Nov-Jul, imms Feb	1	1	2 4 6-8
Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca*	Res, nest Dec, juvs Feb, May	3	3	2-8
Hartlaub's Duck *Pteronetta hartlaubii*	Jan, Mar (see text)	-	-	6
Garganey *Spatula querquedula*	PM 16 Feb	1	-	-
Eurasian Wigeon *Mareca penelope*	PM Mar	-	-	4 7
Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca*	PM 26 Dec	-	1	4
Numididae				
Helmeted Guineafowl *Numida meleagris*	Res, chicks Sep-Dec	7	8	2 4 5 7 8
Western Crested Guineafowl *Guttera verreauxi*	Res (see text)	-	-	5 6
Odontophoridae				
Stone Partridge *Ptilopachus petrosus*	Res	1	1	1 4 5 7
Phasanidae				
Blue Quail *Synoicus adansonii*	AM? Nov-Mar? Jul	-	-	3 4 7
Harlequin Quail *Coturnix delegorguei*	AM Dec-May	1	1	2-4 7
Scaly Spurfowl *Pternistis squamatus*	Res, nest Dec	1	-	4 7
Heuglin's Spurfowl *Pternistis icterorhynchus*	Res, chicks Oct-Dec	12	12	2-7
Caprimulgidae				
European Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*	PM 1 & 29 Mar	1	1	-
Fiery-necked Nightjar *Caprimulgus pectoralis nigriscapularis*	Res? 24 Jan, Feb	1	-	2 4 7

Species	Status	de Saeger coll.		References
		IRSNB	MRAC	
Swamp Nightjar *Caprimulgus natalensis*	Res	-	1	1-5
Plain Nightjar *Caprimulgus inornatus*	Res	5	5	2 4 5 10
Freckled Nightjar *Caprimulgus tristigma*	Res, juvs 5 May	2	2	1
Long-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus climacurus*	AM? nest Mar (see text)	11	10	2-4 6 7
Slender-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus clarus*	One February 1994 (see text)	-	-	-
Standard-winged Nightjar *Caprimulgus longipennis*	AM Nov-Apr. Br Feb-Mar (see text)	6	6	1-7
Pennant-winged Nightjar *Caprimulgus vexillarius*	AM 13 Mar-Sep	5	4	1 2 4 7 10
Apodidae				
African Palm Swift *Cypsiurus parvus*	Res, nests Jan-Mar.	-	-	2-8
Alpine Swift *Tachymarptis melba*	PM Dec-May (see text)	-	-	1 2 4 5 7
Common Swift *Apus apus*	PM Feb-Mar, Aug-Sep	-	1	2-5 7
Little Swift *Apus affinis*	Res, nests May-Sep	-	-	2 4 5 7
White-rumped Swift *Apus caffer*	AM? Jun-Jul	-	-	2 4 5 7
Musophagidae				
Great Blue Turaco *Corythaeola cristata*	Res	1	1	2
Eastern Plantain-eater *Crinifer zonurus*	Res	9	10	2-7
White-crested Turaco *Tauraco leucolophus*	Res	9	8	2-5 7
Otididae				
Denham's Bustard *Neotis denhami*	AM? Dec-Apr, display Dec, juv Apr	2	1	3 4 6-8
Black-bellied Bustard *Lissotis melanogaster*	Res	3	3	2-5 7
Cuculidae				
Senegal Coucal *Centropus senegalensis*	Res	13	12	2-8
Blue-headed Coucal *Centropus monachus*	Res	3	-	-

Species	Status	de Saeger coll.		References
		IRSNB	MRAC	
Black Coucal *Centropus grillii*	AM? Oct-Jan, Apr-Jul, imms May	-	-	4 7
Blue Malkoha *Ceuthmochares aereus*	Res	2	2	2 6
Great Spotted Cuckoo *Clamator glandarius*	AM? Dec-Apr, Aug	2	2	2 5 6
Levaillant's Cuckoo *Clamator levaillantii*	AM? Mar-Jun, Aug-Nov	3	3	2 4 6 7
Thick-billed Cuckoo *Pachycoccyx audeberti*	Res? Jan, Mar, Nov (see text)	1	-	6 10
Diederik Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx caprius*	Res? Apr-Dec	10	10	2-7
Klaas's Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx klaas*	Res, all months	7	9	2-7
African Emerald Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx cupreus*	Res? 19 Nov & 14 Dec	-	2	3 6
Black Cuckoo *Cuculus clamosus*	Res? most months (see text)	1	1	2-4 6 7
Red-chested Cuckoo *Cuculus solitarius*	AM? Feb-Aug, calling Mar	1	1	2-4 6 7
African Cuckoo *Cuculus gularis*	AM Dec-May	-	1	1-7
Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*	PM Sep-Apr	7	5	2 6 10
Columbidae				
European Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*	PM 2 Dec (see text)	1	-	-
Red-eyed Dove *Streptopelia semitorquata*	Res	8	7	2-4 6 7
Vinaceous Dove *Streptopelia vinacea*	Res	8	8	2 4 5-7
Laughing Dove *Spilopelia senegalensis*	Res	5	5	2-4 6 7
Black-billed Wood Dove *Turtur abyssinicus*	Res	-	-	4 7
Blue-spotted Wood Dove *Turtur afer*	Res	10	10	2-5 7
Tambourine Dove *Turtur tympanistria*	Res	1	1	2 4 5 7
Namaqua Dove *Oena capensis*	AM? Dec-May, Sep-Oct	-	-	2 4 6 7
Bruce's Green Pigeon *Treron waalia*	(see text)	1	-	1 4
African Green Pigeon *Treron calvus*	Res, nest building Aug	9	9	2-7

Species	Status	de Saeger coll.		References
		IRSNB	MRAC	
Heliornithidae				
African Finfoot *Podica senegalensis*	Res, Feb, Jul, Sep	-	-	4 7
Sarothruridae				
White-spotted Flufftail *Sarothrura pulchra*	Res	4	4	6
Rallidae				
African Crake *Crecopsis egregia*	AM May-5 Jul	1	1	1 2 7
Spotted Crake *Porzana porzana*	PV (see text)	-	1	4 6
Lesser Moorhen *Paragallinula angulata*	AM May	-	1	2 6
Black Crake *Zapornia flavirostra*	Res	6	6	2-4 6 7
Striped Crake *Aenigmatolimnas marginalis*	AV May	-	-	11
Podicipedidae				
Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*	AM? Dec-Jan	-	-	4 7
Turnicidae				
Common Buttonquail *Turnix sylvaticus*	Res	4	5	3 4 7
Burhinidae				
Spotted Thick-knee *Burhinus capensis*	AM? 10 Jan (see text)	1	-	-
Eurasian Stone-curlew *Burhinus oedicnemus*	PM Dec-Mar (see text)	1	1	2 4 7
Senegal Thick-knee *Burhinus senegalensis*	Res	5	7	2-8
Recurvirostridae				
Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*	PM? Dec-Mar	-	-	4 7 8
Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*	PM? Nov-Dec	-	-	4 6 7
Charadriidae				
Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*	PM 22 Nov-Mar	1	-	2 4 5 7

Species	Status	de Saeger coll.		References
		IRSNB	MRAC	
Forbes's Plover *Charadrius forbesi*	AM? Feb-Mar, Jun	4	3	2 4 7
Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*	PM Feb-Mar	3	3	2 4 6 7
Spur-winged Lapwing *Vanellus spinosus*	Res	-	-	2-5 7
White-crowned Lapwing *Vanellus albiceps*	Res	-	-	2 4-7
African Wattled Lapwing *Vanellus senegallus*	Res	3	4	1-8
Caspian Plover *Anarhynchus asiaticus*	PM Jan-Mar	-	1	4 7
Kittlitz's Plover *Anarhynchus pecuarius*	AM? Nov-Mar	-	-	4 7
Pluvianidae				
Egyptian Plover *Pluvianus aegyptius*	AM Dec-May, nests Feb-Mar	-	-	2 4-7
Rostratulidae				
Greater Painted-snipe *Rostratula benghalensis*	Res?	2	2	2 4 7 8
Jacanidae				
African Jacana *Actophilornis africanus*	Res	4	4	2-7
Scolopacidae				
Great Snipe *Gallinago media*	PV 15 Feb	-	-	4 7
Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*	PM Dec-Mar	2	2	2 4 7
Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*	PM Aug-May	7	7	2 3 5-7
Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*	PM Dec-Apr	6	5	2 4 5 7
Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*	PM Feb-Mar	-	1	4 5 7
Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*	PM Dec-Apr	7	7	2 4 5 7
Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*	PV 12 Feb	-	-	4
Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*	PM Oct, Dec-Apr	1	-	2-5 7
Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*	PV Mar	-	-	4 7

Species	Status	de Saeger coll.		References
		IRSNB	MRAC	
Ruff *Calidris pugnax*	PV Oct	-	-	2
Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*	PM Feb (see text)	-	-	4 7
Little Stint *Calidris minuta*	PV 11-12 Feb (see text)	-	-	4
Glareolidae				
Bronze-winged Courser *Rhinoptilus chalcopterus*	AM 6 Jan-Mar	2	2	1 6
Temminck's Courser *Cursorius temminckii*	AM Jan-Mar	1	1	2 4 7
Rock Pratincole *Glareola nuchalis*	Res? May, Jul, Sep	-	-	2 5
Black-winged Pratincole *Glareola nordmanni*	PM 31 Mar-15 Apr (see text)	1	1	2 6 7
Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola*	AM? Feb-Jun, Oct	-	-	2 4 5 7
Laridae				
Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica*	PV Oct	-	-	2
Ciconiidae				
African Openbill *Anastomus lamelligerus*	AM Dec-Mar	2	2	2 4 7 8
Marabou Stork *Leptoptilos crumenifer*	Res, nests Jun & Sep-Dec	1	1	2-5 7 8
Yellow-billed Stork *Mycteria ibis*	AM Nov-May	2	2	2 4-7
Saddle-billed Stork *Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis*	Res, nests Nov-Dec, juvs Jan.	1	1	2-5 7 8
Abdim's Stork *Ciconia abdimii*	AM Oct-Apr	3	3	2-8
African Woolly-necked Stork *Ciconia microscelis*	AM Nov-May, nest Jan	2	2	2-8
Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*	PV 30 Dec	-	1	4
White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*	PM Nov-Mar, May, Jul	-	-	1 2 4 7
Anhingidae				
African Darter *Anhinga rufa*	AM? Dec-Jun	4	3	4 6-8
Phalacrocoracidae				
Reed Cormorant *Microcarbo africanus*	Res	2	2	2 4 6 7

Species	Status	de Saeger coll.		References
		IRSNB	MRAC	
Threskiornithidae				
African Sacred Ibis *Threskiornis aethiopicus*	AM Nov-May, juvs Feb	3	2	2-5 7
Hadada Ibis *Bostrychia hagedash*	Res	2	2	2-8
African Spoonbill *Platalea alba*	AM Jan-Mar	-	-	4 7
Ardeidae				
Dwarf Bittern *Botaurus sturmii*	AM? Jan, Mar, May-Jun & Oct	-	1	1 2 4-7
Little Bittern *Botaurus minutus*	Res, PV 12 Apr (see text)	1	2	-
Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*	Res/PM?, most months (see text)	4	4	2 4-8
Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*	AM/PM? Nov-May	-	-	2-5 7
White-backed Night Heron *Calherodius leuconotus*	Res (see text)	1	-	-
Striated Heron *Butorides striata*	Res, juvs Nov	3	3	2-7
Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides*	PM/Res? Dec-Jun	1	2	2 4 5 7
Western Cattle Egret *Ardea ibis*	Res, noted all months	2	3	1-7
Great Egret *Ardea alba*	Res	1	1	2-5 7
Yellow-billed Egret *Ardea brachyrhyncha*	Res? Oct- May, Aug	-	-	2 4 6 7
Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*	Res	-	1	2 4 5 7
Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*	Res? noted most months	1	1	2 4 5 7
Black-headed Heron *Ardea melanocephala*	Res, noted most months	1	2	2-7
Goliath Heron *Ardea goliath*	Res, Jan-Jun, Oct	1	-	2 4 5 7
Scopidae				
Hamerkop *Scopus umbretta*	Res	4	4	1-8
Pelecanidae				
Pink-backed Pelican *Pelecanus rufescens*	AM Dec-Mar, Jun	-	-	4 7 8

Species	Status	de Saeger coll.		References
		IRSNB	MRAC	
Sagittariidae				
Secretarybird *Sagittarius serpentarius*	AV Dec-Jun	1	-	2-5 7 8
Pandionidae				
Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*	PV Nov, Mar	-	-	2 7
Accipitridae				
Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus*	Res	2	1	2-7
African Harrier-Hawk *Polyboroides typus*	Res	1	1	2-5 7
Palm-nut Vulture *Gypohierax angolensis*	Res, nest Dec, juvs in Dec-Mar	3	2	2-7
European Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*	PV Dec, 5 Apr-May	-	-	2 5 6
African Cuckoo-Hawk *Aviceda cuculoides*	Res? (see text)	1	1	1
Hooded Vulture *Necrosyrtes monachus*	Res	5	5	2-5 7
White-backed Vulture *Gyps africanus*	Res, nests, juvs Jun	1	1	1-7
Rüppell's Vulture *Gyps rueppelli*	Res	-	-	2-4 7
White-headed Vulture *Trigonoceps occipitalis*	Res, nest Aug	1	-	1 2 4 5 7
Short-toed Snake Eagle *Circaetus gallicus*	PV, 8 Nov (see text)	-	1	4
Beaudouin's Snake Eagle *Circaetus beaudouini*	AM? (see text)	-	-	2 4 5 6 7
Black-chested Snake Eagle *Circaetus pectoralis*	AV Feb (see text)	-	-	3 4
Brown Snake Eagle *Circaetus cinereus*	AM? Feb-Mar, May	-	-	4 7
Western Banded Snake Eagle *Circaetus cinerascens*	Res? 7 Feb	-	-	2-4
Bateleur *Terathopius ecaudatus*	Res	-	-	1-7
Bat Hawk *Macheiramphus alcinus*	Res, most months	-	-	4 7
Martial Eagle *Polemaetus bellicosus*	Res	-	1	2 4 5 7
Long-crested Eagle *Lophaetus occipitalis*	Res	2	3	2-7

Species	Status	de Saeger coll.		References
		IRSNB	MRAC	
Wahlberg's Eagle *Hieraaetus wahlbergi*	AM Oct, Dec-Apr	-	-	2-4 7
Ayres's Hawk-Eagle *Hieraaetus ayresii*	Res? Feb (see text)	-	-	4 7
Steppe Eagle *Aquila nipalensis*	PM Jan-Apr (see text)	-	-	6
Tawny Eagle *Aquila rapax*	Res, nests Jan & Mar-Apr	3	3	1 2 4 7 8
African Hawk-Eagle *Aquila spilogaster*	Res? Feb & Sep	-	-	1 4 7
Lizard Buzzard *Kaupifalco monogrammicus*	Res, all months	4	3	1 2 4 6 7
Gabar Goshawk *Micronisus gabar*	AM? Mar, Dec	-	-	4 7
Dark Chanting Goshawk *Melierax metabates*	Res, most months	1	-	1 4 7
Shikra *Tachyspiza badia*	Res, nests Feb-Mar, juvs Apr	-	-	1 2 4 6 7
Levant Sparrowhawk *Tachyspiza brevipes*	PV 2 Mar (see text)	-	-	4
Ovambo Sparrowhawk *Accipiter ovampensis*	AV? 21 Jul	-	-	1 4
Western Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*	PM 30 Oct-May	2	3	2-4 7
Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus*	PM Dec-Mar	1	1	2 4 5 7
Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus*	PM 31 Dec-Apr	1	1	2-4 7
Black Kite *Milvus migrans*	PM Dec-Mar (see text)	5	5	2 3 5 7
Yellow-billed Kite *Milvus aegyptius*	Res?, nests Feb-Mar (see text)	4	4	1-8
African Fish Eagle *Ichthyophaga vocifer*	Res, nests Dec-Jan, Oct	1	1	2-5 7 8
Grasshopper Buzzard *Butastur rufipennis*	AM Dec-Apr	8	9	2-5 7
Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*	PM Nov, Feb-Apr (see text)	-	-	2 4-7
Red-necked Buzzard *Buteo auguralis*	AM Nov-May, nest Apr	1	-	1-8
Tytonidae				
Western Barn Owl *Tyto alba*	Res	2	5	2-4 7 8
Strigidae				
Pearl-spotted Owlet *Glaucidium perlatum*	Res, nest (see text)	-	-	3

Species	Status	de Saeger coll.		References
		IRSNB	MRAC	
Eurasian Scops Owl *Otus scops*	PM 18 Jan-13 Feb	2	1	-
African Scops Owl *Otus senegalensis*	Res	4	4	2 4 7
Northern White-faced Owl *Ptilopsis leucotis*	Res, juvs Mar	1	1	1 4 7
Greyish Eagle-Owl *Bubo cinerascens*	Res (see text)	5	4	2-4 6-8
Verreaux's Eagle-Owl *Ketupa lactea*	Res	3	3	1-5 7
Pel's Fishing Owl *Scotopelia peli*	Res	3	2	2 4 5 7
African Wood Owl *Strix woodfordii*	Res	5	5	2
Coliidae				
Speckled Mousebird *Colius striatus*	Res, juvs May	16	18	1-7 10
Trogonidae				
Narina Trogon *Apaloderma narina*	Res? (see text)	1	1	-
Upupidae				
Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops*	Res? PV (see text)	5	4	2-7 10
Phoeniculidae				
Green Wood Hoopoe *Phoeniculus purpureus*	Res	6	7	1 2 4 6 7 10
Black Scimitarbill *Rhinopomastus aterrimus*	Res	6	6	4 6 7 10
Bucorvidae				
Abyssinian Ground Hornbill *Bucorvus abyssinicus*	Res, nest Mar-Apr	1	1	1-4 7 8
Bucerotidae				
Congo Pied Hornbill *Lophoceros fasciatus*	Res	1	3	2
African Grey Hornbill *Lophoceros nasutus*	AM Oct-Jun, nest Mar	5	7	1-7
Black-and-white-casqued Hornbill *Bycanistes subcylindricus*	AM? Feb-Jun	3	2	3 4 6 7
Black-casqued Hornbill *Ceratogymna atrata*	AV? (see text)	-	-	2 6

Species	Status	de Saeger coll.		References
		IRSNB	MRAC	
Coraciidae				
Abyssinian Roller *Coracias abyssinicus*	AM? Dec-Mar, Jun & Sep	3	2	2-8
European Roller *Coracias garrulus*	PV Mar (Garamba), 15 Nov (Faradje)	-	-	1 2
Broad-billed Roller *Eurystomus glaucurus*	AM Feb-Oct (see text)	1	1	1-7 10
Alcedinidae				
Grey-headed Kingfisher *Halcyon leucocephala*	AM, Nov-May, nest (see text)	14	15	2-7 10
Striped Kingfisher *Halcyon chelicuti*	Res	15	16	2-7
Blue-breasted Kingfisher *Halcyon malimbica*	Res	1	1	2 4-7
Woodland Kingfisher *Halcyon senegalensis*	Res (see text)	3	2	2-7
African Pygmy Kingfisher *Ispidina picta*	Res (see text)	10	11	2-7
Malachite Kingfisher *Corythornis cristatus*	Res	3	4	2-5 7
Shining-blue Kingfisher *Alcedo quadribrachys*	Res	2	2	2 4 7
Giant Kingfisher *Megaceryle maxima*	Res, nest Feb	-	1	2-7
Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis*	Res	5	6	2-7
Meropidae				
Swallow-tailed Bee-eater *Merops hirundineus*	AM?, Jun-Jul & Jan-Feb	3	2	1 2 4 7
Little Bee-eater *Merops pusillus*	Res	8	6	2 4-7
Red-throated Bee-eater *Merops bulocki*	Res, nests Dec-Apr, juvs Feb	8	8	2-8
White-throated Bee-eater *Merops albicollis*	AM, Oct-Jun (see text)	11	11	1 2 4-7
Blue-cheeked Bee-eater *Merops persicus*	PM Dec-Apr, Jul (see text)	5	6	1-4 7
European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*	PM Sep-Oct, Jan, Mar-Apr	-	-	2 4 5 7
Northern Carmine Bee-eater *Merops nubicus*	AM Sep-May, nests Jan-Apr	12	12	2-8 10
Lybiidae				
Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus bilineatus*	Res	3	2	2-7

Species	Status	de Saeger coll.		References
		IRSNB	MRAC	
Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus chrysoconus*	Res	-	-	2 4 6 7
Hairy-breasted Barbet *Tricholaema hirsuta*	Res	5	5	4-7
Vieillot's Barbet *Lybius vieilloti*	Res	2	1	6
White-headed Barbet *Lybius leucocephalus*	Res	12	10	4-7 10
Black-billed Barbet *Lybius guifsobalito*	Res	2	3	1-7
Double-toothed Barbet *Pogonornis bidentatus*	Res	4	4	2 4-7
Black-breasted Barbet *Pogonornis rolleti*	Res? (see text)	-	-	4 5 10
Indicatoridae				
Least Honeyguide *Indicator exilis*	Res (see text)	-	-	6
Lesser Honeyguide *Indicator minor*	Res (see text)	1	-	2 5 6
Greater Honeyguide *Indicator indicator*	Res	7	7	1-7 10
Picidae				
Red-throated Wryneck *Jynx ruficollis*	Res? 11 Mar (see text)	-	-	2 6 11
Brown-eared Woodpecker *Pardipicus caroli*	Res (see text)	-	-	6
Fine-spotted Woodpecker *Campethera punctuligera*	Res	3	2	3 4 6 7 10
Nubian Woodpecker *Campethera nubica*	Res (see text)	1	-	-
Golden-tailed Woodpecker *Campethera abingoni*	Res	-	-	4 6 7
Little Spotted Woodpecker *Campethera cailliautii*	Res	5	6	2 4 5 7
Speckle-breasted Woodpecker *Dendropicos poecilolaemus*	Res	2	1	1 5
Cardinal Woodpecker *Dendropicos fuscescens*	Res	3	3	2 4 5 7
African Grey Woodpecker *Dendropicos goertae*	Res, juv Jan	3	3	2-7
Brown-backed Woodpecker *Dendropicos obsoletus*	Res	2	3	1-4 6 7
Falconidae				
Lesser Kestrel *Falco naumanni*	PV 18 Dec, Mar	1	1	-

Species	Status	de Saeger coll.		References
		IRSNB	MRAC	
Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*	PM Oct-Apr, AM? (see text)	1	2	2 4 7
Grey Kestrel *Falco ardosiaceus*	Res, nest Mar	-	-	2 4 5 7
Red-necked Falcon *Falco chicquera*	Res, nests Aug-Sep, juvs Jun	-	1	2 4-7
Eurasian Hobby *Falco subbuteo*	PV Nov, Apr	-	1	2 3
African Hobby *Falco cuvierii*	Res? (see text)	2	1	2 4 6 10
Lanner Falcon *Falco biarmicus*	AM Jan-Apr (see text)	1	1	2 7
Psittaculidae				
Red-headed Lovebird *Agapornis pullarius*	Res, nest Oct	8	8	1-4 6 7 10
Platysteiridae				
Western Black-headed Batis *Batis erlangeri*	Res	2	2	2 4-7
Brown-throated Wattle-eye *Platysteira cyanea*	Res, nest Apr	8	9	2-7
Malaconotidae				
Grey-headed Bushshrike *Malaconotus blanchoti*	Res	2	2	1 2 4 6 7 10
Orange-breasted Bushshrike *Chlorophoneus sulfureopectus*	Res	13	13	1-7
Marsh Tchagra *Bocagia minuta*	Res	8	6	2-7
Black-crowned Tchagra *Tchagra senegalus*	Res	6	7	1-4 6 7
Red-eyed Puffback *Dryoscopus senegalensis*	Res (see text)	-	-	4 6
Northern Puffback *Dryoscopus gambensis*	Res	23	26	2-7 10
Tropical Boubou *Laniarius major*	Res, nest Sep	6	6	2-7
Black-headed Gonolek *Laniariuser*	Res	2	2	2-4 6 7
Vangidae				
White-crested Helmetshrike *Prionops plumatus*	Res	4	5	1 6
Campephagidae				
White-breasted Cuckooshrike *Ceblepyris pectoralis*	Res? Jan-Aug	6	6	1 4 6 7 10

Species	Status	de Saeger coll.		References
		IRSNB	MRAC	
Red-shouldered Cuckooshrike *Campephaga phoenicea*	Res? (see text)	8	7	2-7 10
Oriolidae				
African Golden Oriole *Oriolus auratus*	Res? (see text)	9	9	1 2 4-7 10
Eurasian Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*	PV Mar	-	1	-
Dicruridae				
Velvet-mantled Drongo *Dicrurus modestus*	Res (see text)	2	2	-
Fork-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus adsimilis*	Res	16	16	2-7 10
Sharpe's Drongo *Dicrurus sharpei*	Res	1	1	-
Monarchidae				
African Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone viridis*	AM (see text)	15	15	1-7
Laniidae				
Yellow-billed Shrike *Lanius corvinus*	Res	5	4	1 4
Northern Fiscal *Lanius humeralis*	Res	5	4	2-7
Emin's Shrike *Lanius gubernator*	Res	4	3	1 2 4 7
Lesser Grey Shrike *Lanius minor*	PM Apr-May (Jul?) (see text)	-	-	2-4 7
Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator*	PM Nov-Apr (see text)	1	1	2 4-7
Isabelline Shrike *Lanius isabellinus*	PM Oct-Apr (see text)	3	3	2-4 6 7
Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*	PV Nov, Feb, May (see text)	1	-	2 4 6
Red-tailed (Turkestan) Shrike *Lanius phoenicuroides*	PV Dec (see text)	1	-	-
Corvidae				
Piapiac *Ptilostomus afer*	Res	-	-	2 4 6 7
Pied Crow *Corvus albus*	Res	1	-	2 4 6-8
Stenostiridae				
African Blue Flycatcher *Elminia longicauda*	Res, nests May-Jun & Sep	4	4	1-7

Species	Status	de Saeger coll.		References
		IRSNB	MRAC	
Paridae				
White-shouldered Black Tit *Melaniparus guineensis*	Res	16	15	1 2 4-7 10
Nicatoridae				
Western Nicator *Nicator chloris*	Res	-	1	2 6
Alaudidae				
Rufous-rumped Lark *Pinarocorys erythropygia*	AM Feb-Mar, Nov (see text)	2	2	2 4 6 7
Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark *Eremopterix leucotis*	AV Mar (see text)	-	1	-
Flappet Lark *Amirafra rufocinnamomea*	Res	1	-	2-5 7
Sun Lark *Galerida modesta*	Res	3	2	1 2 4 7
Pycnonotidae				
Yellow-eyed Bristlebill *Bleda ugandae*	Res	-	1	5 6
Yellow-gorgeted Greenbul *Atimastillas flavicollis*	Res	12	12	2 4-7
Simple Greenbul *Chlorocichla simplex*	Res (see text)	-	-	6
Little Greenbul *Eurillas virens*	Res	3	5	2 3 5 6
Yellow-whiskered Greenbul *Eurillas latirostris*	Res (see text)	-	-	6
Leaf-love *Phyllastrephus scandens*	Res	4	4	4 6 7
Dark-capped Bulbul *Pycnonotus tricolor*	Res, nest Mar	14	14	2-7
Hirundinidae				
Black Saw-wing *Psalidoprocne pristoptera*	Res? (see text)	1	1	1-7
Grey-rumped Swallow *Pseudhirundo griseopyga*	AM Feb-Mar	-	-	4 7
Banded Martin *Neophedina cincta*	AV (see text)	-	-	4 7
Brown-throated Martin *Riparia paludicola*	Res	-	-	4 7
Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*	PM Jan-Apr	-	-	2-5 7

Species	Status	de Saeger coll.		References
		IRSNB	MRAC	
Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*	PM Sep-Apr	3	3	2-7
Wire-tailed Swallow *Hirundo smithii*	Res, nests Aug-Sep, juvs Apr	3	3	2-7
Western House Martin *Delichon urbicum*	PM (see text)	-	1	2-5 7
African Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis melanocrissus*	AM (see text)	-	-	3 4 7
Lesser Striped Swallow *Cecropis abyssinica*	Res, nests May and Dec	1	-	2-5 7
Red-breasted Swallow *Cecropis semirufa*	AM Feb-Jun	1	-	2 4-7
Mosque Swallow *Cecropis senegalensis*	AM? Dec-May	3	4	2 5-7
Preuss's Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon preussi*	Res? (see text)	-	-	1 2 4
Macrosphenidae				
Moustached Grass Warbler *Melocichla mentalis*	Res	17	18	2-7
Northern Crombec *Sylvietta brachyura*	Res	2	2	2 4-7
Green Crombec *Sylvietta virens*	Res	-	-	2-4 7
Phylloscopidae				
Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*	PV 1 Dec & 24 Feb	1	1	2
Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*	PM 12 Nov-Apr	8	8	2-7
Acrocephalidae				
Greater Swamp Warbler *Acrocephalus rufescens*	Res	1	-	5 6
Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*	PM 28 Sep-1 Dec	2	2	5
Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*	PV 10 Nov	2	-	2
Common Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*	PM Nov, Jan, Feb (see text)	2	2	2 4 5 7
African Yellow Warbler *Iduna natalensis*	Res	2	3	2 4-7
Eastern Olivaceous Warbler *Iduna pallida*	PM 8 Nov-3 Apr (see text)	3	3	2 4-6
Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina*	PV 26 Mar	-	1	2 4 7

Species	Status	de Saeger coll.		References
		IRSNB	MRAC	
Locustellidae				
Fan-tailed Grassbird *Catriscus brevirostris*	Res	1	1	1 4 7
Cisticolidae				
Red-faced Cisticola *Cisticola erythrops*	Res	4	5	2-5 7
Singing Cisticola *Cisticola cantans*	Res	3	2	1 2 4-7
Whistling Cisticola *Cisticola lateralis*	Res	8	7	1 2 5 12
Winding Cisticola *Cisticola marginatus*	Res (see text)	1	-	1 2 4-7
Croaking Cisticola *Cisticola natalensis*	Res	3	4	2-7
Short-winged Cisticola *Cisticola brachypterus*	Res	7	8	4-7
Tawny-flanked Prinia *Prinia subflava*	Res	5	5	1-7
Red-winged Prinia *Prinia erythroptera*	Res	1	1	2 4 5 7
White-chinned Prinia *Schistolais leucopogon*	Res (see text)	-	-	2 4-7
Red-winged Grey Warbler *Drymocichla incana*	Res	8	7	2-7
Buff-bellied Warbler *Phyllolais pulchella*	Res (see text)	-	-	2 4 7
Yellow-breasted Apalis *Apalis flavida*	Res	1	2	2-5 7
Grey-capped Warbler *Eminia lepida*	Res	2	2	5
Green-backed Camaroptera *Camaroptera brachyura*	Res (see text)	9	9	2-7
Green-backed Eremomela *Eremomela canescens*	Res	3	1	1 2 4 6 7 10
Sylviidae				
Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*	PM Sep-Dec (see text)	5	5	2 5 6
Common Whitethroat *Curruca communis*	PV? (see text)	-	-	2 5
Zosteropidae				
Northern Yellow White-eye *Zosterops senegalensis*	Res	4	4	2-7

Species	Status	de Saeger coll.		References
		IRSNB	MRAC	
Pellorneidae				
Spotted Thrush-Babbler *Illadopsis turdina*	Res (see text)	6	6	6 10
Leiothrichidae				
Brown Babbler *Turdoides plebejus*	Res	10	7	1-7
Dusky Babbler *Turdoides tenebrosa*	Res	8	8	4-7
Hyliotidae				
Yellow-bellied Hyliota *Hyliota flavigaster*	Res	4	4	1 2 4-7 10
Certhiidae				
African Spotted Creeper *Salpornis salvadori*	Res	2	2	1-4 6 7
Sturnidae				
Wattled Starling *Creatophora cinerea*	AV Dec (see text)	-	-	2
Greater Blue-eared Starling *Lamprotornis chalybaeus*	Res	-	1	2 5 10
Lesser Blue-eared Starling *Lamprotornis chloropterus*	Res, nests Feb-Mar	19	21	2-4 6 7
Bronze-tailed Starling *Lamprotornis chalcurus*	Res? Oct-Mar (see text)	-	-	4-7
Splendid Starling *Lamprotornis splendidus*	AM (see text)	-	-	5 6 10
Purple Starling *Lamprotornis purpureus*	AV? (see text)	-	-	4
Violet-backed Starling *Cinnyricinclus leucogaster*	Res/AM (see text)	9	8	1 2 4-7 10
Buphagidae				
Yellow-billed Oxpecker *Buphagus africanus*	Res	4	4	2-8
Turdidae				
African Thrush *Turdus pelios*	Res	4	4	2-7
Muscicapidae				
White-browed Scrub Robin *Cercotrichas leucophrys*	Res	1	1	-

Species	Status	de Saeger coll.		References
		IRSNB	MRAC	
Pale Flycatcher *Agricola pallidus*	Res	1	2	1-3 6
White-browed Forest Flycatcher *Fraseria cinerascens*	Res (see text)	-	-	6
Grey Tit-Flycatcher *Fraseria plumbea*	Res	6	6	2-5 7 10
Northern Black Flycatcher *Melaenornis edolioides*	Res	11	11	2-7
Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*	PM Sep-Nov & Mar (see text)	4	3	2 4-7
Gambaga Flycatcher *Muscicapa gambagae*	AV? (see text)	1	-	7
Swamp Flycatcher *Muscicapa aquatica*	Res (see text)	-	-	5
Snowy-crowned Robin-Chat *Cossypha niveicapilla*	Res	9	11	2-7
Common Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos*	PM Nov, Feb-Mar (see text)	-	1	2 5 6
Semicollared Flycatcher *Ficedula semitorquata*	PV Mar (see text)	-	-	2
Collared Flycatcher *Ficedula albicollis*	PV Mar (see text)	1	-	2
Common Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*	PM Oct-Mar	-	1	2 4 6 7
Common Rock Thrush *Monticola saxatilis*	PM Dec-Feb (see text)	2	2	2 4 7
Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*	PM 9 Oct-14 Apr	17	16	2-7
Mocking Cliff Chat *Thamnolaea cinnamomeiventris*	Res (see text)	-	-	4 6
Sooty Chat *Myrmecocichla nigra*	Res, nest Jul	14	15	2-7
Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*	PM 28 Nov-22 Mar	14	14	2 4 7
Isabelline Wheatear *Oenanthe isabellina*	PV Feb (see text)	-	-	2 4 7
White-fronted Black Chat *Oenanthe albifrons*	Res	7	8	1 2 4 6 7
Nectariniidae				
Western Violet-backed Sunbird *Anthreptes longuemarei*	Res	16	14	1-7
Violet-tailed Sunbird *Anthreptes aurantius*	Res (see text)	-	-	2 11
Collared Sunbird *Hedydipna collaris*	Res	1	-	2 3 6

Species	Status	de Saeger coll.		References
		IRSNB	MRAC	
Pygmy Sunbird *Hedydipna platura*	AM Dec-Mar, Jul (see text)	9	8	2 4 6 7
Green-headed Sunbird *Cyanomitra verticalis*	Res	7	9	2-7
Olive Sunbird *Cyanomitra olivacea*	Res (see text)	-	1	5 10
Green-throated Sunbird *Chalcomitra rubescens*	Res (see text)	-	-	2 6
Scarlet-chested Sunbird *Chalcomitra senegalensis*	Res	7	7	2 4-7
Olive-bellied Sunbird *Cinnyris chloropygius*	Res	2	1	2 4 7
Palestine Sunbird *Cinnyris osea*	AM? (see text)	2	1	2
Splendid Sunbird *Cinnyris coccinigastrus*	Res? Feb-Mar & Jun	-	1	1 2 4-7
Copper Sunbird *Cinnyris cupreus*	Res	18	18	2-7
Passeridae				
Sahel Bush Sparrow *Gymnoris dentata*	AM? (see text)	-	-	-
Northern Grey-headed Sparrow *Passer griseus*	Res	4	5	1-7
House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*	Res	-	-	2 3
Ploceidae				
Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-Weaver *Plocepasser superciliosus*	Res, nest Feb	-	-	4 7
Thick-billed Weaver *Amblyospiza albifrons*	Res (see text)	3	3	-
Baglafecht Weaver *Ploceus baglafecht*	Res? (see text)	-	-	4 7
Little Weaver *Ploceus luteolus*	Res	2	1	2 6
Spectacled Weaver *Ploceus ocularis*	Res	11	12	2-7
Black-necked Weaver *Ploceus nigricollis*	Res (see text)	-	-	1 2 5 6
Orange Weaver *Ploceus aurantius*	Res (see text)	-	-	2
Heuglin's Masked Weaver *Ploceus heuglini*	Res, nests Mar (see text)	6	6	1 2 4 5 7
Northern Masked Weaver *Ploceus taeniopterus*	Res	6	6	2 3 5 6

Species	Status	de Saeger coll.		References
		IRSNB	MRAC	
Vitelline Masked Weaver *Ploceus vitellinus*	Res? (see text)	-	-	3-5 7
Village Weaver *Ploceus cucullatus*	Res	37	37	2-7
Vieillot's Black Weaver *Ploceus nigerrimus*	Res (see text)	-	-	2-7
Compact Weaver *Ploceus superciliosus*	Res	4	4	2-7
Red-headed Weaver *Anaplectes rubriceps*	Res	3	3	1
Red-headed Quelea *Quelea erythrops*	AM? (see text)	6	6	2 4-7
Yellow-crowned Bishop *Euplectes afer*	Res	2	2	2 4 6 7
Black Bishop *Euplectes gierowii*	Res	2	1	6
Black-winged Red Bishop *Euplectes hordeaceus*	Res, br dress Jul-Nov	20	20	1 2 4-7
Northern Red Bishop *Euplectes franciscanus*	Res, br dress Jun-Nov (see text)	-	-	4 5 7 10
Yellow Bishop *Euplectes capensis*	Res	2	2	1 4-7
Yellow-mantled Widowbird *Euplectes macroura*	Res, nests Sept-Oct	40	40	1-7 10
Red-collared Widowbird *Euplectes ardens*	Res, br dress Jul-Aug	11	12	2 4-7
Estrildidae				
Bronze Mannikin *Spermestes cucullata*	Res, nests Sep	5	5	1-4 6 7
Magpie Mannikin *Spermestes fringilloides*	Res, nests Jul-Oct	-	-	2 4 6 7
Black-and-white Mannikin *Spermestes bicolor*	Res (see text)	-	-	6
Green Twinspot *Mandingoa nitidula*	Res? May	-	-	4 7
Grey-headed Nigrita *Nigrita canicapillus*	Res	-	-	2
Grey-headed Oliveback *Delacourella capistrata*	Res, nest Sep	3	3	2 4-7
Black-crowned Waxbill *Estrilda nonnula*	Res	-	-	2 6
Fawn-breasted Waxbill *Estrilda paludicola*	Res	8	10	2-7
Common Waxbill *Estrilda astrild*	Res	1	-	2 4-7

Species	Status	de Saeger coll.		References
		IRSNB	MRAC	
Locust Finch *Paludipasser locustella*	Res (see text)	-	-	1
Orange-breasted Waxbill *Amandava subflava*	Res?, Apr-May	2	5	2 4 7
Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu *Uraeginthus bengalus*	Res	3	2	1-7
Black-bellied Seedcracker *Pyrenestes ostrinus*	Res	4	3	-
Red-winged Pytilia *Pytilia phoenicoptera*	Res	3	4	1 2 4 6 7
Dybowski's Twinspot *Euschistospiza dybowskii*	Res	2	1	3
Brown Twinspot *Clytospiza monteiri*	Res	10	9	2 3 5-7
African Firefinch *Lagonosticta rubricata*	Res	-	-	1 3
Black-bellied Firefinch *Lagonosticta rara*	Res	6	5	2 4-7
Bar-breasted Firefinch *Lagonosticta rufopicta*	Res (see text)	-	-	2 4-7
Black-faced Firefinch *Lagonosticta larvata*	Res	1	2	1 4 7
Viduidae				
Jambandu Indigobird *Vidua raricola*	Res (see text)	-	-	6 9
Wilson's Indigobird *Vidua wilsoni*	Res, br dress Jul (see text)	1	1	4 6 7
Cameroon Indigobird *Vidua camerunensis*	Res (see text)	2	1	6 9
Pin-tailed Whydah *Vidua macroura*	Res, br dress from Jun	18	19	1-7
Exclamatory Paradise Whydah *Vidua interjecta*	Res, br dress from Jul	3	3	2 4 6 7
Cuckoo-finch *Anomalospiza imberbis*	Res? (see text)	3	3	1
Motacillidae				
Western Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*	PM, Oct-Apr (see text)	7	5	2-7
Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*	PV, Jan	-	8	4 7
White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*	PM, Dec-Feb	-	3	4 7
African Pied Wagtail *Motacilla aguimp*	Res, nests Feb & Sep, juvs Mar	2	-	2-8

Species	Status	de Saeger coll.		References
		IRSNB	MRAC	
Yellow-throated Longclaw *Macronyx croceus*	Res, nest Nov	6		1-7
Plain-backed Pipit *Anthus leucophrys*	Res	7	9	1 2 4-7
Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*	PM, Feb-Mar	2	-	2 4-7 10
Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus*	PV, Dec & Feb (see text)	-		4 5 7
Fringillidae			1	
Yellow-fronted Canary *Crithagra mozambica*	Res	7	-	2 3 5-7
West African Seedeater *Crithagra canicapilla*	Res, juvs Jun	1	6	1 2 4 7
Emberizidae				
Gosling's Bunting *Emberiza goslingi*	AM?	1		-
Brown-rumped Bunting *Emberiza affinis*	Res	-		1 4
Cabanis's Bunting *Emberiza cabanisi*	Res	7		1 2 4-7

Appendix 2.

Gazetteer of localities (DR Congo unless mentioned otherwise)

Aloma plateau, South Sudan ..... 3°45′N, 30°45′E
Angodia ..... 3°34′N, 25°44′E
Avakubi, Ituri ..... 1°22′N, 27°35′E
Azande hunting reserve ..... 4°20′N, 28°42′E
Bagbele ..... 4°21′N, 29°17′E
Baginzi Mt (767 m), DR Congo/South Sudan ..... 4°28′N, 29°01′E
Bagunda Mt (892 m), Dungu district, Haut-Uele ..... 4°14′N, 29°35′E
Budongo forest, Uganda ..... 1°47′N, 31°35′E
Dedegwa/Aka confluence. ..... 4°31′N, 29°39′E
Dungu (town) ..... 3°37′N, 28°33′E
Faradje, Uelle ..... 3°45′N, 29°42′E
Gangala-na-Bodio hunting reserve ..... 3°41′N, 29°08′E
Garamba/Aka confluence .....not traced
Garamba/Nalibili confluence .....not traced
Gurba river ..... 3°51′N, 27°17′E
Ishwa lake ..... 2°13′N, 31°12′E
Juba, South Sudan ..... 4°52′N, 31°30′E
Kajo-Kadji, South Sudan ..... 3°52′N, 31°40′E
Koboko, Uganda ..... 3°25′N, 30°58′E
Kotshio river ..... 4°13′N, 29°48′E
Kudurma, South Sudan ..... 4°45′N, 29°35′E
Mabanga, see Nagero
Mogbwamu river .....4°20-35′N, 29°18-47′E
Mondo Missa hunting reserve ..... 4°02′N, 30°09′E
Murchison (Kabalega) Falls, Uganda ..... 2°17′N, 31°41′E
Nagero, Garamba National Park ..... 3°45′N, 29°31′E
Ndélélé (Dalélé), Kotshio river ..... 4°22′N, 29°47′E
Rungu ..... 3°11′N, 27°53′E
Wago Mt, Lendu Plateau ..... 1°44′N, 30°49′E

Short communications

An overlooked population of the Black-lored Babbler *Turdoides sharpei* resembling the subspecies *vepres* in northern Tanzania, with comments on phenotypic variation in *vepres* and evidence for past hybridization with the Northern Pied Babbler *T. hypoleuca*

The East African near-endemic Black-lored Babbler *Turdoides sharpei* (type locality south of Tabora, central Tanzania) ranges from central and southern Tanzania north through the Lake Victoria basin and central Rift Valley to Uganda, western and central Kenya, where, in several areas, it occurs alongside Brown *T. plebejus*, Arrow-marked *T. jardineii* and Northern Pied Babbler *T. hypoleuca* (Zimmerman *et al.* 1996, Fry 2000). Three forms within *sharpei* have been described: 1) *grisescens* (Reichenow 1908) in northwestern Tanzania and southwestern Uganda, which is widely considered a junior synonym of *sharpei* in current literature; 2) *clamosa* (van Someren 1920) at Naivasha in the central Kenya Rift Valley, which is also considered a junior synonym of *sharpei*; and 3) *vepres* Meinertzhagen 1937 in the Laikipia region. A fourth phenotypic variant, which occurrs further northeast in the Loldaiga Hills, around Dol Dol and the Lewa Downs areas, approaches the appearance of Northern Pied Babbler *T. hypoleuca hypoleuca*, and is undescribed (see: Appearance).

Presence in northern Tanzania

A recent examination of field images (sourced from the Macaulay Library and iNaturalist) from Seronera in the central Serengeti to Ngorongoro Crater in northern Tanzania indicate the presence of birds there consistent with *vepres* (Fig. 3), and showing variation very similar to that exhibited by *vepres* in Kenya (Fig. 2). This represents either a new or a previously overlooked population disjunct from that of the well-known birds which have hitherto been considered restricted to the Laikipia region of central Kenya (Zimmerman *et al.* 1996). The recently discovered birds in Tanzania occur in similar semi-arid upland savannah habitat to those in Kenya, both areas in the rain shadows of large massifs (west and north of Mt Kenya, and west of the Tanzanian Crater Highlands respectively). The distribution of such variable forms, that would appear referable to the taxon *vepres*, is shown in Figure 1.

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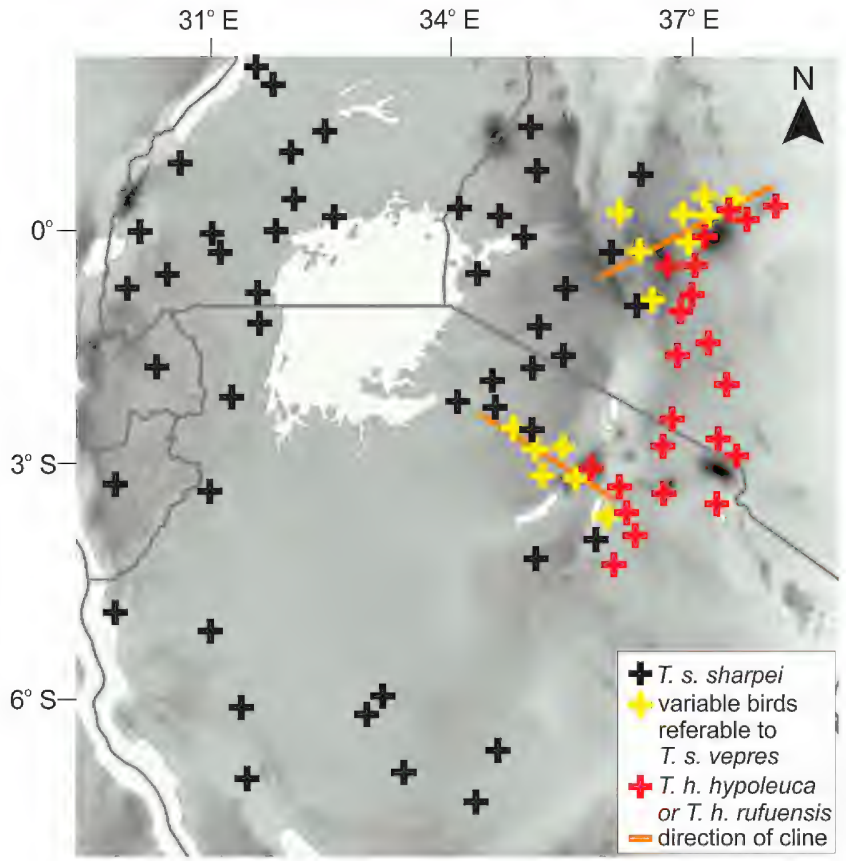

Figure 1. Map showing records of *Turdoides sharpei*, *T. hypoleuca*, and birds with variable appearance referable to the form *vepres*. Mapped locations are those of recognizable field images or literature references to specific taxa.

Appearance

From our own field experience, as well as from scrutiny of a large number of field images of the species, the variation shown by *clamosa*, *vepres* and the undescribed phenotype occurring in the Lolldaiga Hills, around Dol Dol and at Lewa Downs, would appear to be clinal, representing a transition from the Black-lored Babbler *T. sharpei* to the Northern Pied Babbler *T. hypoleuca*. Furthermore, this same sequence of variation is seen in those birds of northern Tanzania from Seronera in the central Serengeti east to the Ngorongoro Crater and Tarangire NP, where the resident subspecies of Northern Pied Babbler is *T. h. rufuensis*.

In *clamosa* (central Kenya Rift Valley form) the chin and throat are white, mottled greyish, with lower underparts grey with dark feather centres (Fig. 2B). Birds with a very similar appearance are also found in the Seronera region of the Serengeti Game Reserve (Fig. 3B). In *vepres* (Laikipia form), by contrast, the white of the throat is clearer and unmarked, although its extent may vary from a small central patch on the throat similar to *clamosa* (Fig. 2C) to, more typically, a larger patch extending to the breast as is typically associated with *vepres* (Fig. 2D). The same variation is seen in birds in northern Tanzania in the Ndutu area, where the underparts may also vary,

from those appearing more uniformly dusky and only indistinctly scaled, as in *sharpei* (Fig. 3C), to those with a more ornate underpart pattern of mixed hues of brown and prominent white feather margins that create a strong scalloped/scaled appearance (Fig. 3D). North of Mt Kenya from Lolldaiga to Lewa Downs, an undescribed variant (northeasternmost form) shows more extensive white on the breast, belly and undertail coverts, and with dark underpart scaling restricted to a broad patch on the flanks (Figs. 2E & 2F). Again, very similar birds with extensively brown-coloured flanks but a narrowly white belly are found in northern Tanzania at Ngorongoro Crater to Tarangire NP, where *vepres*-type birds meet *T. h. rufuensis* (Fig. 3E). It should be noted that these undescribed phenotypes may resemble the two subspecies of Northern Pied Babbler (nominate and *rufuensis*) more closely than they do *T. s. vepres*, with that species differing only by way of more extensive white underparts broken only by dark brown pectoral tabs that extend partly across the breast (Figs. 2G & 3F).

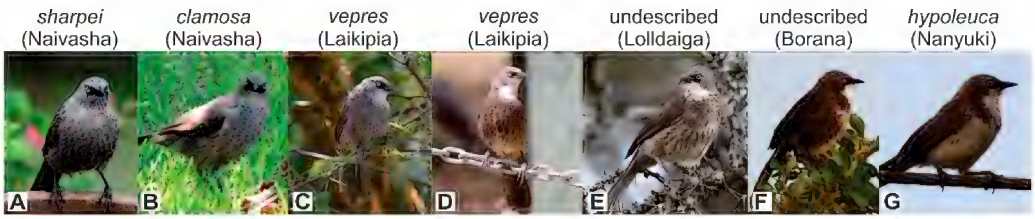

Figure 2. Images of *Turdoides* Babblers across a west-east cline in central Kenya as labelled (**A:** ML350691051, D. Van Peursem; **B:** iNat9194299, M. Plagens; **C:** ML623454691, D. Jensen; **D:** iNat24831058, Anon; **E:** ML616822173, A. Nagda; **F:** ML462903821, N. Lu; **G:** ML479660201, F. Theofanopoulos).

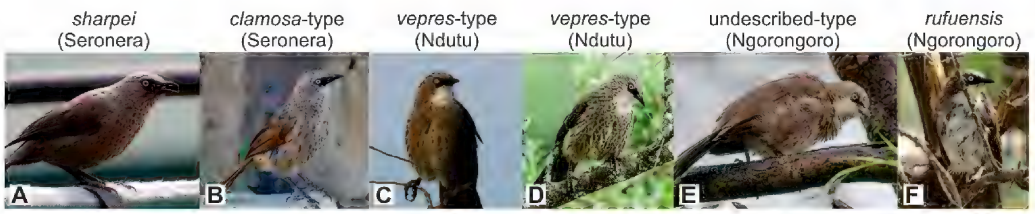

Figure 3. Images of *Turdoides* Babblers across a west-east cline in northern Tanzania as labelled (**A:** iNat180261584, H. Cui; **B:** ML611522294, I. Kilusu; **C:** iNat242972332, Anon; **D:** iNat203642132, M. Simon; **E:** iNat126619548, Anon; **F:** iNat82927467, M. Chard).

Remarks

While all Afrotropical babblers pose taxonomic issues, a detailed molecular analysis remains lacking, other than a single sampling by Cibois *et al.* (2018), who, while addressing primarily Asian babblers, did find a close relationship between *sharpei* and *hypoleuca* (Northern Pied Babbler). This would appear to support the photographic evidence presented here documenting, from *sharpei* to *hypoleuca*, a putative three-step west to east cline across Kenya (at ~0°) and N Tanzania (at ~3°S), including those undescribed birds north of Mt Kenya that resemble a "streaky-breasted" Northern Pied Babbler". Further supporting these findings of a close taxonomic relationship between *hypoleuca* and *sharpei*, it can be noted that they share whitish-grey irides; these being different colours in other *Turdoides* babblers of the region.

Based on the finding of Cibois *et al.* (2018) together with photographic evidence from Kenya and northern Tanzania, it would seem appropriate to currently consider *sharpei* a variable East African near-endemic with suggestions of past hybridization with Northern Pied Babbler *Turdoides hypoleuca* (Zimmerman *et al.* 1996)

Gazetteer

Country	Locality	Coordinates
Kenya	Borana	0°13'7"N, 37°16'35"E
Kenya	Dol dol	0°23'30"N, 37° 9'51"E
Kenya	Laikipia	0°3'51"N, 36°51'57"E
Kenya	Lewa Downs	0°11'20"N, 37°25'45"E
Kenya	Lolldaiga Hills	0°11'15"N, 37° 6'44"E
Kenya	Naivasha	0°44'4"S, 36°25'49"E
Kenya	Nanyuki	0°0'37"N, 37°4'35"E
Tanzania	Ndutu	3°1'23"S, 35° 1'36"E
Tanzania	Ngorongoro Crater	3°11'15"S, 35°34'7"E
Tanzania	Seronera	2°27'7"S, 34°49'3"E
Tanzania	Tabora	5°2'48"S, 32°52'16"E
Tanzania	Tarangire NP	4°6'44"S, 36° 8'6"E

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Comment concerning Saunders's Tern *Sternula* (*a.*) *saundersi* and subspecies of Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

Following the publication of two major papers discussing identification challenges and pitfalls in the positive differentiation of Saunders's Tern *Sternula* (*a.*) *saundersi* from races of Little Tern *Sternula albifrons* (nominate and *levantinus*), the East African Rarities Committee has reviewed the status of *saundersi* in the East African Region and, based on the Mullarney & Campbell's (2022) criteria, one photographed on Manda Island on 14 July 2014 was judged to be the first record for Kenya and possibly the East African Region (Hunter 2024).

Although the wintering range of *saundersi* remains unclear, it certainly includes the western Indian Ocean, south to the Seychelles, Comoros and Aldabra, the west coast of India, the Maldives and Sri Lanka. Meanwhile, the status of *Sternula albifrons levantinus* and its close similarity to *saundersi* also remains unclear, but in view of two ringing recoveries of Israeli-bred birds in coastal Mozambique (Kiat *et al.* 2023), it too can be expected to occur along the East African coast.

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Details of a shearwater *Puffinus* sp. recovered at Limuru, Kenya, October 1963: first record from Kenya and the East African region

During the night of 17–18 October 1963 a shearwater collided with a newly erected TV mast at 7000 ft (2134 m) near Limuru, some 20 miles (32 km) northwest of Nairobi. The following morning the injured bird was delivered to the Coryndon (now National) Museum, Nairobi where J.G. Williams (Curator of birds) identified it simply as a *Procellaria* sp.

Shortly afterwards he sent the specimen to the American Museum of Natural History, New York, where it was catalogued (AMNH 788928) as an Audubon's Shearwater *Puffinus lherminieri* subspecies *bailloni*, then the only known form of Audubon's Shearwater to occur in the Western Indian Ocean. The specimen soon came to the attention of the late Robert Murphy, a world authority on pelagic birds, who is reported to have commented that, "it may be *persicus*".

Figure 1. The 1963 Limuru specimen. Photo: Augie Kramer, American Museum of Natural History.

At the time, no details of this extraordinary record (over 480 km inland from the Kenya coast) were documented, but thanks to Paul Sweet, Collection Manager, Department of Ornithology, American Museum of Natural History, New York and his colleague Augie Kramer, the specimen has been re-examined. James Bradley kindly provided useful data and comments on the identification.

Biometric data
Wing (not pressed): 188 mm
Tail length (from base): 73 mm
Tarsus: 38.40 mm
Exposed culmen: 26.95 mm
Body weight (from original label): 6.25 oz =177 g

While the bird was undoubtedly a disorientated individual, the Little/Audubon's Shearwater complex is known to occasionally undergo long distance vagrancy. However, its taxonomy remains largely unresolved; it has been discussed at length by Austin *et al.* (2004), Bretagnolle *et al.* (2000), Louette & Herremans (1985), Shirihai & Bretagnolle (2015), Shirihai & Christie (1996), Shirihai *et al.* (1995) and Safford (2013).

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An assessment of the label and biometric data shows this bird to represent the subspecies *nicolae* of the Tropical Shearwater *Puffinus bailloni* rather than the nominate form, as had long been accepted. In showing dark undertail coverts, *bailloni* can be ruled out, as *bailloni*'s are extensively white. It may be further discounted because the culmen measurement is too short for *bailloni* (and *colstoni*) which has an exposed culmen of 28.5 to 31.0 mm (Louette & Herremans 1985). In addition, both subspecies of the Persian Shearwater can be comfortably ruled out by the short culmen and tarsus (Bradley *et al.* 2023).

In support of an identification of *nicolae*, are all the measurement data, which fit firmly within the ranges given for this taxon by Louette & Herremans (1985, Table 1). Additional supporting features include clear pectoral patches (absent in Persian Shearwater), blackish upperparts that are well demarcated from the white underparts below the lores and cheeks (typically less clear in Persian Shearwater), and black feet with grey webs as noted on the label. In Persian Shearwater, and the form *colstoni* of Tropical Shearwater, the feet are noted to be black with flesh pink webs (Bradley *et al.* 2023). Meanwhile, additional biometric data would now appear to suggest a possible Maldives bird. Shirihai & Christie (1996) give the following measurements from samples of five each of Seychelles and Maldives birds:

Bill depth: 5.6–6.5 mm (Seychelles and Maldives) vs Limuru bird 5.58 mm

Maxillary unguis: 12.1–13.5 (Seychelles and Maldives) vs Limuru bird 12.00 mm

Breast width: 31–38 mm (Seychelles) and 19–35 mm (Maldives) – the Limuru bird is only 19.26 mm, suggesting it might be from the Maldives population, with the blackish upperparts additional supporting evidence.

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Remarks concerning the Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis* in East Africa

Authors have long debated whether the East African population of the Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis* belongs to nominate *nigricollis* or to *gurneyi*. Nominate *P.n. nigricollis* was preferred by Benson & Irwin (1963), White (1965), Urban & Brown (1971), Snow (1978), Britton (1980), Brown (1982), Llimona & del Hoyo (1992), Rose & Scott (1997) and Carswell *et al.* (2005), while *P.n. gurneyi* was preferred by Jackson & Sclater (1938), Vaurie (1965), Cramp & Simmons (1977), Clancey (1980), Zimmerman *et al.* (1996), Ash & Atkins (2009), Dickinson & Remsen (2013), del Hoyo & Collar (2014) and Gill *et al.* (2024).

Figure 1. Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps n. nigricollis*, July 1977, breeding behind the Ngong Hills, Nairobi. Photo: Dave Richards.

Wetlands International follows Rose & Scott (1997) who considered East African birds a 'discrete' population of nominate *nigricollis*, with *gurneyi* deemed to be a separate southern African population.

There is no evidence that Palaearctic birds winter in East Africa and the Ethiopian and East African population (*c.* 4000–5000) is largely resident. However, there are local movements in response to rainfall affecting Rift Valley lakes south to lakes in the Crater, Mbulu and Singida highlands, northern Tanzania. Sporadic breeding can occur following high rainfall. Occasional vagrants reported in the southern Tanzania highlands may also belong here.

To date, notable concentrations have been in: Ethiopia: 1054 Lake Abiata, January 1996. Kenya: 2000+ Lake Elementeita, August–November 1990; 1800+ Lake Bogoria,

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January 1995, 3500+ January 1997, 2700+ January 2000 and 677 in January 2019. Tanzania: 500+ Lake Masek, Serengeti August 1981 and 670 in April 2000. Uganda: two southwestern records 1969–1970. Bred in the Rift Valley swamps (behind the Ngong Hills) during June and July 1977 and May and June 1997. Breeding has also been recorded in northern Tanzania at Eluanata Dam (west of Arusha) June–July 1958, and January 1962; near Longido in July 1989 and at Yaida swamp in February and March 2001.

The southern African *gurneyi* population (*c.* 24 000) is restricted to South Africa, Botswana and Namibia, with wanderers and vagrants recorded north to southwestern Zimbabwe and southern Zambia. This subspecies is marginally smaller than nominate birds (wing 117–137 mm, mean 125.4 mm, compared to 124–139 mm, mean 134 mm male, 130 mm female). It is also greyer on the upperparts; the ear tufts are paler straw-yellow rather than the bright golden-yellow of nominate birds. This subspecies (*gurneyi*) is unusual among wetland birds in that it spends two periods of the year in entirely different habitats: salt water and fresh water, with Namibia being a vital link in its distribution, as the majority of the population forms large flocks in the non-breeding season along Namibia's coast (Simmons *et al.* 2015).

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Watercock *Gallicrex cinerea* in Djibouti: first record for Africa

On 4 June 2024, a citizen of Djibouti city found a bird at his house, close to the international airport of Djibouti (11°33'20.22" N, 43°8'54.54" E). The bird was brought to the veterinary clinic at DECAN wildlife refuge on 7 June 2024. The next day, a careful inspection of the bird was conducted, no injuries were detected, the bird was capable of walking, running and flying, no damage to the wings was apparent and the plumage appeared to be in good condition. Several photographs and a few measurements were taken before it was released in the afternoon in a swampy area with freshwater in Djibouti city, not far from the coast and an area of mangrove forest.

The bird was identified as a large and slim rail (Rallidae) with long yellowish-olive-grey legs and toes. The general colour of the plumage consisted of a mix of black and brown feathers. The bird had a yellow bill with a small yellowish frontal shield, dark brown iris and a whitish chin dotted with black feathers. The upperparts were a mix of black and dark brown and the underparts had buffy scalloping. White colouration at the carpal joint was visible from above, the lesser underwing-coverts were white and brown, and the primaries were uniformly brown. The tail was short with whiter, dark barred undertail coverts. Wing length was 205 mm, head 69.79 mm and tarsus 81.48 mm. It was not possible to obtain a precise weight due to the lack of a suitable balance. Instead, a set of scales for humans was used which gave a weight range between 300 and 400 g. According to the plumage and other physical features, the specimen was identified as a non-breeding male Watercock *Gallicrex cinerea* (Figure 1). This would appear to be the first record for Africa.

The Watercock is an Asian rallid, breeding in summer in South-East Asia (mostly China), and wintering in South Asia (India, Pakistan, Indonesia), usually along rivers, grassy swamps, flooded pasture, ponds and ditches (Taylor *et al.* 2020). A few records of vagrant individuals have been reported in the Arabian Peninsula, especially in the Dhofar region in Oman (Menzie 2014, Porter & Aspinall 2010, Taylor *et al.* 2020). The westernmost record reported is from Socotra in 2011 (Porter & Suleiman 2011). To our knowledge, the species has never been reported in Africa but it is listed as a potential vagrant in the Horn of Africa region by Redman et *al.* 2011.

At first sight the presence of a Watercock in Djibouti seems quite improbable. One hypothesis is that someone might have brought the bird to Djibouti. However, we are not aware of any bird trade occurring in Djibouti, especially of birds coming from Asia. In Djibouti, a few citizens keep exotic birds but these are mostly popular species such as Peacocks *Pavo cristatus* or Budgerigars *Melopsittacus undulatus*. We doubt that anyone would be interested in keeping a Watercock.

A second hypothesis is that the bird was ship-assisted. Djibouti harbour is on a major trade route between Asia and Europe. However, the chances of a bird surviving the duration of a voyage is thought to be low.

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Figure 1. Photographs of the specimen collected at the veterinary clinic in Djibouti city on 7 June 2024.

The third, and most likely hypothesis is that this bird's arrival was influenced by weather conditions and increased availability of suitable habitat. Watercock is a migrant species known to be capable of flying long distances, with some vagrants regularly reported from the Arabian Peninsula, so under favourable circumstances one could theoretically reach the Horn of Africa coast. In April 2024 extreme climatic events, with violent storms and exceptionally heavy rainfall from 14th to 20th, resulted in extensive flooding in the Arabian Peninsula (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2024_Persian_Gulf_floods). It seems possible that these unusually wet conditions could have encouraged some birds to venture further west than usual.

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Black-fronted Francolins *Pternistis castaneicollis atrifrons* near Moyale in northern Kenya

The Black-fronted Francolin *Pternistis castaneicollis atrifrons* is endemic to a narrow elevational band of slopes within a small range in southern Ethiopia. This little-known taxon is considered a subspecies of the Chestnut-naped Francolin *P. castaneicollis* by some authorities. It is reportedly confined to an area of *c.* 1290 km² near, and south of, the town of Mega, Ethiopia, with an estimated population of 1100 to 2100 mature individuals. There is a sight record near Moyale, Kenya from 1975, but the species was not detected in the same area during three visits between 1988 and 2022. On 1 and 2 May 2023 we detected no fewer than eight Black-fronted Francolins in two canyons west of Moyale, Kenya at 880 to 1120 m elevation—lower than the published elevation for the taxon. These birds were only slightly outside the modelled range (Gedeon *et al.* 2018). However, occupancy below 1000 m near Moyale suggests the species could also be present along the mountains east of Moyale, so that the range could be 50% larger than currently thought.

Introduction

The Black-fronted Francolin is considered a full species *Pternistes atrifrons* by some authorities (BirdLife International, Conover, 1930; Peters, 1934), and as a subspecies of Chestnut-naped Francolin *P. castaneicollis* by others (White 1965, Britton 1980, Zimmerman *et al* 1996, Ash & Atkins 2009, Dickinson & Remsen 2013, Mcgowan *et al.* 2022, Gill *et al.* 2024). The Black-fronted Francolin is smaller than the Chestnut-naped Francolin without any chestnut coloration in the plumage or bold dark markings on the flanks. It was first described in 1929 as a full species but was treated as a subspecies as early as 1963 (Töpfer *et al.* 2014) and is still considered as such by Clements (eBird/Clements Checklist v.2024). Töpfer *et al.* made the case that *atrifrons* should be a full species based on molecular genetic studies (Töpfer *et al.* 2014).

The Black-fronted Francolin is among the most endangered galliform birds in Africa and is therefore of particular conservation interest. Töpfer *et al.* visited various sites within the presumed range for the taxon between 2012 and 2014, and gathered visual and acoustic sightings, droppings, feathers, and observations from villagers (Töpfer *et al.* 2014). The data led them to conclude that the francolin is found in a range of approximately 1290 km² in areas with high rainfall—though lack of observations in many areas led them to estimate that only 33%, or 385 km², of that range is occupied. They require slopes with rocks and moist brushland at 1096 to 2223 m and were not detected in adjacent farmland. Töpfer *et al.* modelled the population size at 1100 to 2100 mature individuals. Habitat loss due to firewood and timber extraction, grazing, agricultural expansion, and hunting with snares are noted as major threats.

In Kenya, Turner & Forbes-Watson (1976) described a calling Black-fronted Francolin from a rocky hillside 6 km south of Moyale on 21 June 1975; the described location is likely about 920 m elevation. However, the area receives little coverage from birders or ornithologists; visits in May 1988, May 2013, and September 2022 failed to detect the species.

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Field coverage

Our group of five birders searched the areas of observation on foot and by vehicle on 1 May, 2 May and briefly on 3 May 2023, covering in total *c.* 20 km of track. The area experienced heavy rains for about five weeks preceding our arrival, and conditions during our 2.5-day survey of the area were cloudy with periods of mist, fog, and heavy rain. When not raining, conditions were quite favourable for detection of game birds; Crested Francolins *Dendroperdix sephaena* were vocal throughout the day and temperatures remained cool. Passerines were also quite active throughout the day.

Figure 1. Locations mentioned in the text.

Our focus was on birdwatching in the highest, moistest hills on the Kenyan side of the border for any species that are rare in Kenya or otherwise not found in the nearby drier habitats that make up most of northeastern Kenya. The hills are coated in thick bush with dry understorey in steep ravines that contain rocky outcrops. We birded in some riverine riparian habitat but most of our coverage was upslope away from creeks and rivers. The forested pockets away from the riparian areas are limited to trees mostly below 10 m tall. The Moyale region, while moister than nearby lowlands, is substantially drier than some of the higher hills around Mega, Ethiopia.

On 1 May we birded along a dirt track on the hill above (west of) Moyale, driving 1–2 km at a time and stopping at spots without human disturbance to listen and scan pockets of activity. We stopped in the lushest patches to walk along the road shoulders and along tracks down the slopes of the hill (Fig. 3). While Black-fronted Francolin was a target bird, we did not attempt playback for francolins except in response to already-vocalizing individuals. In total, we detected four vocalizing Black-fronted Francolins between 10:30 and 12:30. On 2 May we hiked 5 km from Qultipe at 780 m elevation to the Ethiopia border at 1220 m. The track passes from a small village through a few overgrown fields before ascending steep, dry slopes with scattered rocky outcroppings and thick brush. This valley is not nearly as shaded or steep as the ones near Qulta. We detected at least four (heard-only) Black-fronted Francolins between 880 m and 1120 m all between 12:00 to 14:00. Back in Qulta on the morning of 3 May, we covered flatter terrain and farmland edges away from the steep brushy drainages from 6:00 to 10:00 and did not detect any Black-fronted Francolins.

Description of sightings

All of the francolins were detected by call first, and only one of the eight was seen after luring it close to us using playback. The same call type was heard in all instances: a loud trumpet-like scratchy call that emanated from the valley bottoms and carried far—likely 0.5 km or more in some instances. The birds did not venture out into the open and mostly remained obscured from view. The francolin that we saw was initially calling spontaneously across a deep, well-vegetated ravine with thick bush, small trees, numerous grasses and small plants in the understorey with scattered rocks and outcropping. This is a west-draining ravine at 1050 m in elevation. We

attempted playback and lured the bird across the ravine and up the slope. It continued to call as it moved closer and was briefly observed darting across a small vegetated clearing (Fig. 2). Later it perched on a rock and called from there for about 10 min.

Figure 2. Photos the Black-fronted Francolin seen on 1 May 2023 near Qulta, Kenya. Note the lush understorey of the bird when moving through the undergrowth (B) and the rocky, yet shaded outcropping (A) from which it vocalized for about 10 min in response to playback. A: photo Pete Steward. B: photo Adrian Hinkle.

Aside from the single sighting, others were heard rather distantly. Two were within about 500 m of the one seen, one in the same ravine and a second over a ridge into another canyon. The fourth individual at Qulta was on an east-facing slope, with more sparse vegetation, and lower in elevation at 940 m. Four in Qultipe were calling distantly from tall, somewhat steep valley slopes with thick bush but less steep and less vegetated than those in the west-facing ravine in Qulta. They were on east-, west-, and south-facing slopes between 880 and 1120 m elevation.

Figure 3. Habitat photos (A) showing the valley and drainage where francolin was photographed in Fig. 2, (B) showing the understorey at the location of the francolin photographed in Fig 2b.

Discussion

Our findings show that Black-fronted Francolins are more widespread than previously thought. This could make one of the following scenarios true: 1) that the taxon has a larger population than previously thought; 2) that despite the larger range, our sightings reflect a small number of individuals (or wandering individuals from a core range further upslope) and do not substantially change the population estimate; 3) as an extension of scenario 2, the population is similar to the published population, yet the taxon is less dependent on the previously published habitat requirements.

The three scenarios are closely intertwined, as the idea that the population is larger than thought relies on the idea that there is suitable habitat beyond where we observed the birds. The first scenario is that the range, and thus population, is larger than thought. Our areas of observation receive approximately 700 mm of rain per year (20% less than in the known range), are up to 215 m lower in elevation, and most notably are bushy without lush tree cover. There are about 500 km^2 of habitat close to the Ethiopia/Kenya border east of the known range, and another 100 to 200 km^2 of range extension due to the presence below the known elevation within the published range. Applying Gedeon *et al.*'s assumption of 33% occupancy within suitable habitat and elevations, then our findings suggest the occupied range may be around 585 km^2 or an increase of 50% from 385 km^2.

A larger known range does not necessarily mean that the population is larger than thought. This is somewhat supported by the fact that the francolins were not observed in this area during three preceding visits. Our detections were after a healthy rainy season, and it is possible that the birds came down in elevation during the rains and rely on higher, moister hills during drought. We believe, however, that the francolins are probably always present at these lower elevations, and simply hard to detect or less vocal when not rainy. Villagers we talked to in the area were familiar with the species and found it amusing that we wanted to photograph them. Furthermore, a visit to Qulta during an extreme drought in January 2024 by V. Ikawa yielded a single distantly calling Black-fronted Francolin.

Our findings suggest that Black-fronted Francolins are not completely reliant on the highest, moistest hills near Mega as once thought, and at least seasonally they can use brushy ravines down to 880 m rather than forest fragments and forest edges on the hilltops above 1100 m. Future explorations to the hills east of Moyale could reveal if the taxon is present there and confirm our theoretical range estimate. Despite these promising findings, the taxon is still highly range restricted and has a small population that surely faces many threats.

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Clarifying the East African range of the Crested Francolin subspecies *Ortygornis sephaena rovuma* (Gray) with comments on the type locality of *O. s. kirkii* (Hartlaub)

The Crested Francolin *Ortygornis sephaena* is a widespread and common gamebird occurring over much of East Africa. Its appearance in the region takes two general forms:

1. a plain-bellied variety with underpart feathers characterized by a white central shaft contrasting marginally with pale buff to light rusty-brown undertones and [sometimes; age and sex dependent] indistinct brownish transverse barring or vermiculations. Such birds are widely treated as the subspecies *grantii*, and typically include the named taxa *ochrogaster*, *delutenscens* and *jubaensis* as junior synonyms (Hall 1963).
2. a streak-bellied variety with underpart feathers characterized by maroon/chestnut central streaks (sometimes teardrop shaped) contrasting quite markedly with otherwise plain brown or pale buff underparts. This variety is widely referred to the taxon *rovuma*, which has long included the form known as *kirkii*, the description of which by Hartlaub (1868) was based on a poorly prepared specimen from an unspecified location in the eastern parts of what is now Tanzania.

The distribution of these two discreet varieties as stated in the regional literature, however, is confusing. In the early part of the 20th Century, Grant & Mackworth-Praed (1934) judged birds from Duruma in Seyidie Province, Kenya Colony (i.e., the Mombasa area) north to the Juba River in southern Somalia as being of a type lacking the chestnut underpart streaking and referred them to the subspecies *grantii*. Peters (1934) had similarly referred coastal East African birds to unstreaked taxa, accepting *jubaensis* for the coasts of Italian Somaliland and northern Kenya colony south to Lamu, and *grantii* for the remainder of the Kenya coast south of there to Dar es Salaam, with areas southwards from Dar es Salaam reserved for the chestnut-streaked *rovuma*. These positions followed much earlier work by collectors such as Fischer (1885) who likewise referred specimens from Bagamoyo and Pangani (the northeast coast of Tanzania), Mombasa and Lamu (coastal Kenya) to unstreaked birds (*grantii*).

Later, Grant & Mackworth-Praed (1946), after re-examining the series held in the British Museum collection, found that there were birds with chocolate stripes on breast and flanks from British Somaliland, southern Abyssinia, Lamu, Morogoro, Lindi, southern Nyasaland, and near Beira, and birds without stripes from Malindi, and so came to the conclusion that the chocolate-striped birds were either a colour variation or represented a new species. Being inclined to the latter view they proposed that East African birds comprised *Francolinus rovuma rovuma* from the Juba River, southern Italian Somaliland to all coastal areas of Kenya, and south to Morogoro, the Rovuma River, southern Nyasaland and Beira, Portuguese East Africa, *Francolinus rovuma somaliensis* from British Somaliland to southern Abyssinia and northern Kenya at Moyale, and *Francolinus sephaena grantii* in Abyssinia, southern Sudan, southern British and Italian Somaliland south to Tanganyika, except the coastal areas.

This revised taxonomic treatment (recognizing two species, *F. rovuma* Kirk's Francolin and *F. sephaena* Crested Francolin) set the stage for the repetition of a long-standing error. The treatment proposed by Grant & Mackworth-Praed (1946)

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was subsequently adopted by Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1952) and resulted in the now long standing but incorrect view that all coastal East African birds were referable to the streak-bellied *rovuma*. This opinion has been repeated by numerous other authors up to the present day, including White (1965), Britton (1980), Crowe *et al.* (1986), Zimmerman *et al.* (1996), Madge & McGowan (2002) and three contemporary world checklists (Dickinson & van Remsen 2013, del Hoyo & Collar 2014, Gill *et al.* 2024), with the name Kirk's Francolin being in general use both then and to this day (see Remarks, below).

Field photographs

Following scrutiny of a series of field photographs from various parts of coastal East Africa archived in the online bio-inventory databases Macaulay Library (www .macaulaylibrary.org) and iNaturalist (www.inaturalist.org/home), it has become clear to us that Kenyan and northeastern coastal Tanzanian birds do not belong to *rovuma* as is currently perceived, and that an error in attributing this taxon to much of coastal East Africa has long been perpetuated. Field photographs from both the Pangani region (Saadani NP) of northern coastal Tanzania, as well as from the Lamu and Dodori areas of northern coastal Kenya, show birds that are readily identifiable as *grantii* and *jubaensis* respectively, in clearly showing an absence of chestnut streaks on the underparts (Fig. 1; A-C). These birds are wholly consistent with those throughout much of interior Kenya and Tanzania long recognized as being *grantii*.

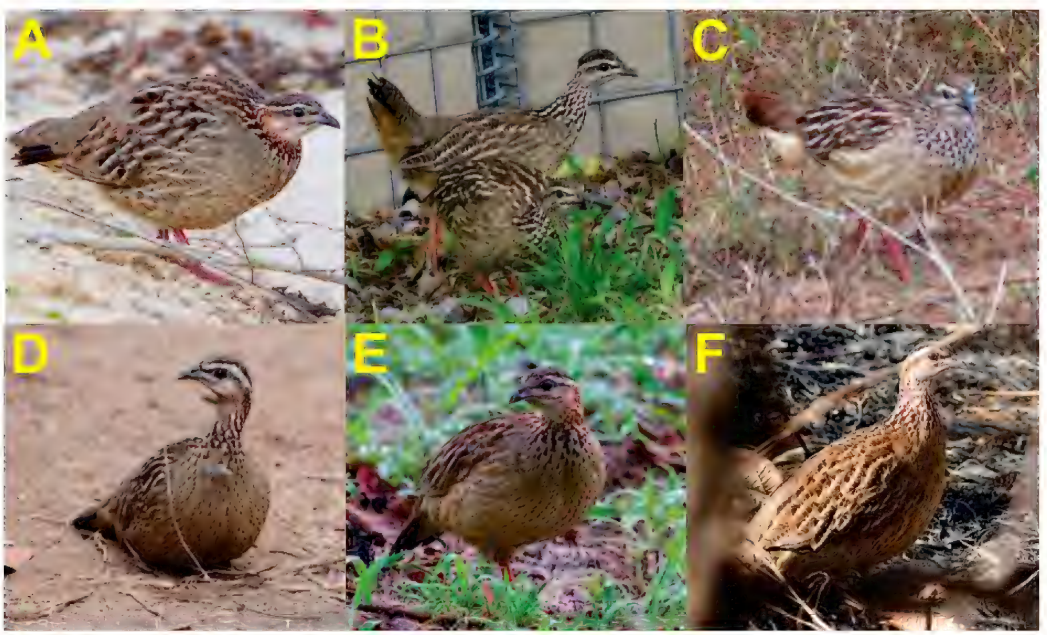

Figure 1. Composite figure of field photographs of East African Crested Francolins *Ortygornis sephaena*, showing examples of the plain-bellied subspecies *grantii* from coastal northern Tanzania and coastal Kenya at Pangani (A: ML 447832661; W. Suter), Lamu (B: ML 207339221; P. Block), and Dodori NR (C: iNat 197306349; S. Musila), alongside examples of the streak-bellied *rovuma* from the Rovuma River (D: iNat 135885434; Y. Massingue), the Selous GR (E: iNat 67792016; G. DuBois) and Mikumi NP (F: ML 356608691; D. Roberson) in central-eastern and southeastern Tanzania.

By contrast, we located field images of birds showing chestnut underpart streaks, and referable to *rovuma*, from only Mikumi NP and the Selous GR south to the Rovuma River on the Mozambique border (Fig. 1; D-F). These areas of eastern Tanzania lie to the south of 7° S at least 350 km distant from southern coastal Kenya (Fig. 2). Following Reichenow (1904), the most northerly specimen record of *rovuma* (*kirkii*) from Tanzania was from 'Usegua', probably the Rukagara/Rukaguru River (Wami River), near Mbusina/Mbusine (*c.* 38°10′ E, 6°15′S) roughly 160 km northeast of Mikumi NP, where it would appear to approach *grantii* most closely (approximately 60–85 km eastwards to Bagamoyo-Pangani, and 200 km northwards to southern coastal Kenya; see Fig. 2).

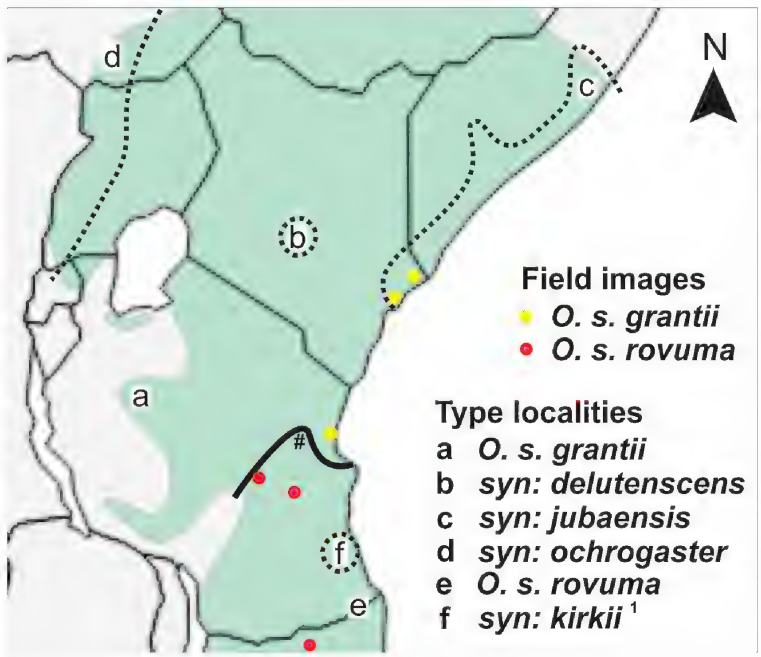

Figure 2. Map of East Africa showing the range of Crested Francolin *Ortygornis sephaena* with the respective distribution limits of the subspecies *O. s. grantii* and *O. s. rovuma*, as determined from field images in this study, divided by a solid black line. Dashed lines show putative range limits for synonymized forms. The # symbol represents the northernmost specimen of *rovuma* (*kirkii*) listed by Reichenow (1904). The type locality of *kirkii* is mapped here within the range of *rovuma*, although its precise location is uncertain (see Remarks below). The overall range depicted is adapted from mapped ranges given by Stevenson & Fanshawe (2020), eBird (2024) and the Tanzania Bird Atlas (www.tanzaniabirds.net/map.htm; in prep.).

Remarks

From the field images scrutinized for this study, and as presented above, it is clear that coastal northern Tanzania and coastal Kenya are occupied by the unstreaked (in terms of chestnut underpart streaking) *grantii*, and not *rovuma* (Kirk's Francolin) as has long been stated in literature accounts. The error unfortunately came about following Grant & Mackworth-Praed (1946) and Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1952) which has been repeated ever since without question. Earlier treatments of this species complex that restricted *rovuma* to areas south of Dar es Salaam and referred birds

north of there to *grantii*, including those of Grant & Mackworth-Praed (1934) and Peters (1934), have been long discounted despite being accurate. The correction of this error, however, may be important as it had been suggested that these two variable forms of Crested Francolin might, in fact, refer to two different species (Hall 1963).

Regarding *kirkii*, it was included within *rovuma* by van Someren (1922) and Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1922), and then unfortunately referred to as Kirk's Francolin by Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1952) and others subsequently. Moreau (1940) had carefully examined Hartlaub's 1867 report on a collection of birds 'formed' (i.e., assembled) on the island of Zanzibar by John Kirk, and while believing that it may have been resident there prior to 1880, Hartlaub's type description of a female with striped underparts did not actually mention Zanzibar Island by name. At the time, Kirk had dozens of collectors out all over the mainland, and therefore the specimen may have come from anywhere along the coastal strip that was ruled over by the then Sultan of Zanzibar, including as far south as the Rovuma River, southeastern Tanzania.

The lack of any evidence of the species on Zanzibar today (Packenham 1979, eBird 2024) suggests that Crested Francolin may never have occurred on the island of Zanzibar itself. Moreover, in early 20th Century correspondence to V.G.L. van Someren, a resident doctor on Zanzibar (Dr Mansfield-Aders) expressed confidence that there were no francolins on the island. As such, inclusion of the island of Zanzibar as part of the range of *kirkii* (or *rovuma*) would appear to be inherently incorrect.

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Spotted Eagle Owl *Bubo africanus* [Greyish Eagle Owl *Bubo (a.) cinerascens*]

König *et al.* (1999) treated *cinerascens* Guérin-Méneville 1843 as a full species, the Greyish Eagle Owl, on the basis of size and eye colour. However, the presence of both yellow- and brown-eyed birds, often paired, in several areas including along the Galana and Lower Tana rivers suggests that many individuals, and particularly those of the form *tanae* Keith & Twomey 1968, may represent intergrades. This, together with the absence of any vocal or other significant differences, suggests that *cinerascens* may best be retained as a subspecies of *africanus* pending comprehensive molecular evidence to the contrary.

Figure 1. *Bubo africanus tanae* along the Galana River, southeastern Kenya, 19 July 2024. Photo: Richard Turner, Origins Safaris Ltd.

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Description of the nest and egg of the Usambara (Montane Tiny) Greenbul *Phyllastrephus albigula*

The Usambara (Montane Tiny) Greenbul *Phyllastrephus albigula* was previously considered part of the Tiny Greenbul *P. debilis* species complex (Britton 1980, Keith 1992), but on the basis of molecular and morphological data, was recently deemed worthy of full species status (Fuchs *et al.* 2011). The Tiny Greenbul *P. debilis* is represented by two subspecies, nominate *debilis* from eastern Zimbabwe, southern Mozambique to southeastern Tanzania, and *rabai* in coastal Tanzania north of the Rufiji River to coastal Kenya (Fishpool *et al.* 2020). The Usambara Greenbul is confined to the Eastern Arc Mountains (600–2150 m) from the Nguu and Nguru Mountains, north to the West and East Usambara Mountains (del Hoyo *et al.* 2020). While the egg, nest and breeding habits of Tiny Greenbul are documented (see Keith 1992, Fishpool *et al.* 2020), the egg of the Usambara Greenbul has remained undescribed (del Hoyo *et al.* 2020).

Here we provide a brief description of the nest and egg of the Usambara Greenbul from the East Usambara Mountains, Tanzania. On 23 January 2017, during a monitoring survey of the Long-billed Tailorbird *Artisornis moreaui*, we encountered an abandoned nest of this greenbul at 1150 m, along ridgetop forest in Nilo Nature Reserve, East Usambara Mountains. One of us (VJM) recognized the nest of this species based on extensive previous experience of nest studies in the area (Mkongewa *et al.* 2013). The nest had external and internal diameters of 6.7 cm and 4.4 cm, respectively, and an internal cup depth of 4.3 cm, and was located in a horizontally positioned fork of a Rubiaceae shrub at 1.4 m above the ground. The nest was not fresh, and was constructed of dry leaves, lichens, moss, and fibres and held together by spider cobwebs (Fig. 1). A single egg was found with dimensions of 21.4 mm and 15.2 mm, with dark to light grey blotches and shades of brown spots and blotches around the entire egg, being slightly denser at the centre, and very dense around the wider end of the egg (Fig. 2).

The first description of the nest of this species was by Sclater & Moreau (1932) from Amani, East Usambaras, as follows, "For two or three days one of these Bulbuls was seen sitting on a little cup-nest of fibres slung in the fork about fifteen feet up in a sapling, but the nest contained no eggs." Other breeding observations include those by VJM, summarized in Mkongewa *et al.* (2013) as "Lowland Tiny Greenbul" *P. debilis*, but these are actually those of Usambara Greenbul which is restricted to upper elevations in the East Usambaras (del Hoyo *et al.* 2020). The elevational range of their study sites was 920 m to 1150 m (Mkongewa *et al.* 2013), and at the time of the study, the taxon was not split. Mkongewa *et al.* (2013) do not describe the egg or nest, but report a nest height of 2.1 m $\pm$ 0.7 SD (n = 20) above the ground, and a mean clutch size of 1.9 $\pm$ 0.3 (n = 15). The nest we found is similar in dimensions and composition to that described for Tiny Greenbul (Fishpool *et al.* 2020). The egg is also similar in colouration and size to that of Tiny Greenbul (Fishpool *et al.* 2020); however, we do not know if the base colour of the one we found had faded from its original colour as it was not a fresh egg. The size of the egg is slightly larger than the average of 18.6 mm x 13.5 mm reported from the southern African population of Tiny Greenbul (Fishpool *et al.* 2020).

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Figure 1. Abandoned nest of Usambara Greenbul *Phyllastrephus albigula* from the East Usambara Mountains.

Figure 2. Egg of Usambara Greenbul *Phyllastrephus albigula* from the East Usambara Mountains.

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Bamboo Warblers *Locustella alfredi* in Busia County: the first records for Kenya

The Bamboo Warbler *Locustella alfredi* is a poorly known bird with small, fragmented populations in Ethiopia south and southwest through East Africa to the Democratic Republic of Congo and northern Zambia. In East Africa, the subspecies *kungwensis* is known from 1800 to 2300 m in the Mahale Mountains in western Tanzania, while the nominate subspecies is present very locally from 1200 to 1600 m n the Albertine Rift Valley in western Uganda (Grimes *et al.* 1997, Carswell *et al.* 2005). Meanwhile, a specimen from Kotido and reports from Mts Morongole and Elgon support the presence of small populations in eastern Uganda (Carswell *et al.* 2005). The preferred habitat of the Bamboo Warbler is described as dense undergrowth in and outside forest, including bamboo, tall grass, rough farmland and deciduous woodland (Grimes *et al.* 1997, del Hoyo *et al.* 2006, Dowsett *et al.* 2008).

Field observations

On 12 June 2024, local Busia County birdwatcher Mr O. Oluoko sent a recording of an unidentified bird to JB for a second opinion. The recording of the unseen bird was made earlier that day at 1250 m in the Katotoi Hills (0°42′18″ N, 34°18′46″ E) in low, thick cover on a hillside, and consisted of a repetitive insect-like ticking sound delivered in long phrases. JB felt that the recorded song shared a number of characteristics consistent with the song of Bamboo Warbler, but the low quality of the recording precluded a conclusive determination at that time. On 12 October 2024, VI visited the Katotoi Hills and, together with Mr Oluoko, succeeded in observing the mystery songster and obtaining additional sound recordings. From these observations it was possible to confirm the presence of Bamboo Warbler at the site, comprising the first records for Kenya. Subsequent visits by other birders in November 2024 have since furnished field images of a bird, further permitting a determination of the subspecies involved.

Field notes recorded by VI describe the Bamboo Warblers at Katotoi Hills as favouring low levels in the interior of thick cover and scrub, rarely ascending more than a metre above ground level. The warblers appeared to favour a small area of hillside (*c.* 3–4 ac (*c.* 1.5 ha)) with a roughly 30-degree slope, in the middle of the patch of remnant habitat, which was minimally disturbed by human activity. Prominent trees and shrubs comprising the thicket habitat across the hillside included *Teclea* sp., *Grewia* sp., *Aframomum* sp., *Ocimum gratissimum*, and *Adiantum* sp., while an absence of any invasive *Lanatana* sp. was notable. The last is highly invasive and widely established in much of Busia County.

Birds observed clearly were noted to resemble the Grey-chested Babbler *Kakamega poliothorax* in general colour tone and markings. This included rufous-brown upperparts and grey-washed flanks with a white throat, although they were smaller in size. VI was able to watch a singing bird for over two minutes from only 2 m away and also noted an indistinct pale supercilium and fine black stripes across the ear coverts. At times, singing males appeared to congregate loosely and counter-sing in close proximity to one another, while otherwise being more typically 50–100 m apart. Photographs of a Bamboo Warbler at Katotoi were obtained by Mr S. Methu on 7 November 2024, clearly showing some of the features described above (Fig. 1).

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The song of the warblers was noted to be very flat, with no crescendo or decrease in intensity. It consists of a steady and rhythmic ticking made up of two high notes and a low note repeated cyclically in phrases varying from 5 to 56 seconds long. This song can be rendered as a rapidly repeated 3-syllable "*kee-kee-tock, kee-kee-tock, kee-kee-tock*" with a hollow, knocking quality (Fig. 2). The song notes cover a frequency range of 1.9 to 3.9 kHz and are delivered at a rate of approximately 7.5 notes per second or 2.4 '*kee-kee-tock*' cycles per second. Birds were heard to sing more consistently well into the morning once the sun had risen; none were heard singing before 09:00 and birds were particularly vocal between 14:00 and 16:00.

Figure 1. Bamboo Warbler *Locustella alfredi* at Katotoi Hills, Busia County, western Kenya, on 7 November 2024 (ML626067844; © S. Methu).

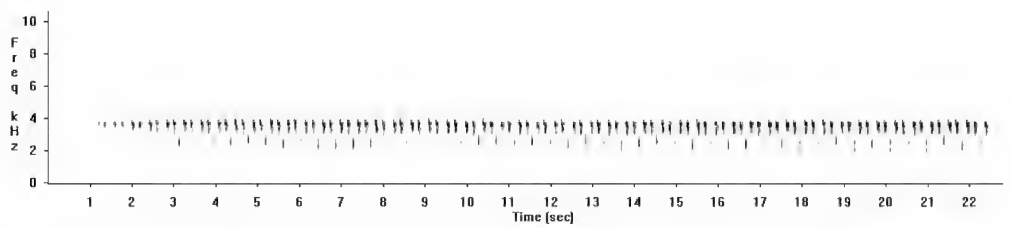

Figure 2. Bamboo Warbler *Locustella alfredi* song recorded at Katotoi Hills, Busia County, western Kenya, on 12 October 2024 (ML626211937; © O. Oluoko).

Remarks

From field observations, and subsequently from field images, it is possible to identify these birds as being of the nominate subspecies, based on rufous-brown vs. blackish olivaceous-brown upperparts as is shown by *L. alfredi kungwensis* (Grimes *et al.* 1997). This is consistent with reported presence of the nominate subspecies on the Ugandan slopes of Mt Elgon (Carswell *et al.* 2005), immediately to the north of Katotoi, while the habitat and altitude where the birds were observed is also consistent with what is known for the species.

The song form and structure of Katotoi birds is similar to that recorded for the species at other sites in its range (e.g., see ML586068311 and XC745578 (Zambia), and XC195878 (Uganda)), although some metrics expand the variation in voice known for the species; for example, the Katotoi song is comprised of a cyclical 3-syllable series of notes (*'kee-kee-tock*), whereas Grimes *et al.* (1997) give details of only a cyclical 2-syllable series (*tchuu-ka*) elsewhere. These authors also give an average delivery rate of 2.5 to 3.0 two-syllable cycles per second, which are delivered more slowly at 2.4 three-syllable cycles per second by the Katotoi birds. Following the same source, the phrase length of Katotoi birds also averages longer (5–56 s; n = 19) than what is known for the species elsewhere (5–20 s; n = 5).

Visitors to the Katotoi Hills since Bamboo Warblers were discovered there have recorded up to five singing birds at one time, and it appears that the species might be resident at the site. However, the area of suitable habitat remaining in the Katotoi Hills amounts to only 65 ha and is under steady pressure to be converted to farmland. As such, this population of Bamboo Warblers can be considered highly threatened, and with a precarious future in Kenya.

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We would like to thank Ouma Oluoko and Steve Methu for making their media available through the Macaulay Library. We also thank Stratton Hatfield for his initial comments on the audio recordings from Katotoi. Don Turner provided helpful comments.

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East African Rarities Committee Reports for 2023 and 2024

The East African Rarities Committee assesses records of new and very rare birds occurring in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi. This includes up to the fifth record of any species (or subspecies) from each of the five countries. The committee will also assess records of non-vagrant species that have not been recorded in the region since 2000. Membership of the committee in 2023 and 2024 comprised Washington Wachira (Chairman), Neil Baker, Nik Borrow, Brian Finch, Colin Jackson, Johnnie Kamugisha, David Moyer, Nigel Redman, Itai Shanni, Roger Skeen, Terry Stevenson and Don Turner. We are grateful to Dick Forsman, Adam Scott Kennedy and James Bradley for their help with the assessment of some of these records.

Sightings of species (or subspecies) for which there are fewer than five records for a country should be submitted to the EARC Secretary, Nigel Hunter, P.O. Box 24803, Karen 00502, Nairobi, Kenya; Email: nigelhunter74@gmail.com. Lists of species with fewer than five records for each country and the EARC rarity form are available as downloads from the EARC website (www.eararities.org). Please contact the Secretary to obtain clarification of whether a record requires submission and for guidance on what details to include in the submission. Old records of rare species are also sought in order to bring the EARC database up to date.

Nomenclature follows the *Checklist of the birds of Kenya*, 5th edition, Nairobi: Bird Committee, Nature Kenya, East Africa Natural History Society. Species not in that list follow the International Ornithological Community's world list (Gill, F., Donsker, D. & Rasmussen, P. (Eds). 2024. IOC World Bird List (v14.2). doi : 10.14344/IOC. ML.14.1.)

Year 2023

Category A(i): Fully accepted species

Cape Shoveler *Spatula capensis*

Second record for Tanzania. A single bird was seen and photographed (Fig. 1) at Ngorongoro Crater (Lake Magadi) on 13 September 2023 (I. Kilusu and R. Atkinson).

Chestnut-naped Spurfowl *Pternistis castaneicollis*

Second record for Kenya. Two birds were seen and photographed near Moyale on 1 May 2023 (M. Adamjee, P. Steward, A. Hinkle, V. Ikawa and A. Waki).

Red Knot *Calidris canutus*

Second record for Tanzania. A single bird was seen and photographed at Mwarongo Salt Pans, south of Tanga on 16 January 2023 (L. Mlawiila and N. Baker).
Third record for Tanzania. A single bird was seen and photographed at Maere Salt Pans, south of Tanga on 22 January 2023 (C. Jackson).

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*

Second record for Uganda. A single bird was seen and photographed (Fig. 1) on the shore of Lake Victoria, near Entebbe on 29 February 2020 (J. Onongo).

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Figure 1. Cape Shoveler *Spatula capensis* (left: I. Kilusu), and Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos* (right: J. Onongo).

Slender-billed Gull *Chroicocephalaus genei*

Third documented record for Uganda. A single bird was seen and photographed (Fig. 2) at Murchison Falls on 05 February 2022 (J. Onongo).

Fourth documented record for Uganda. Four birds were seen and photographed at Entebbe Bay wetlands on 15 January 2023 (A. Lacroix).

Red-billed Tropicbird *Phaethon aethereus*

First record for Kenya. A single bird seen and photographed 6 km offshore from Watamu on 24 March 2022 (J. Gijsbertsen).

Wilson's Storm-petrel *Oceanites oceanicus*

First record for Tanzania. Several birds seen and photographed (Fig. 2) offshore from Fish Eagle Point (near Tanga) during September 2023 (S. Attwell).

Figure 2. Slender-billed Gull *Chroicocephalus genei* (left: J. Onongo) and Wilson's Storm-petrel *Oceanites oceanicus* (right: S. Attwell).

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

First record for Tanzania. A single bird seen and photographed off Mkinga Mwamba reef (near Tanga) on 17 June 2023 (S. Attwell).

Persian Shearwater *Puffinus persicus*

Treatment of Tropical and Persian Shearwaters as two separate species follows Austin *et al.* 2004. Meanwhile, Bradley *et al.* (2023) provide a review of the status of these two species in Kenya and Tanzania. From their findings, they determined that a bird seen off Watamu, near Malindi on 31 December 1972 represented the first record of Persian Shearwater for Kenya, while specimens collected off Msambweni near Shimoni on 16 March 1976, off Mtwapa Creek, Kilifi on 27 December 1981 and one 'beached' at Diani, Ukunda on 26 February 2019, together with a further sight record off Watamu, near Malindi on 1 March 2022 represented the second, third, fourth and fifth records for Kenya.

The EARC have noted that with five confirmed records, this species is no longer an EARC rarity. Meanwhile, for Tanzania, the 'beached' record south of Pangani in March 2009 represented the first record for Tanzania.

Crested (Oriental) Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus*

Second record for Tanzania. A single bird was seen and photographed at Arusha on 9 April 2021 (N. Christensen).

Third record for Tanzania. A single bird was seen and photographed in Arusha National Park on 8 November 2022 (D. Gabriel).

Second record for Kenya. A single bird was seen and photographed in Meru National Park on 18 February 2023 (A. Scott Kennedy).

Third record for Kenya. A single bird was seen and photographed at Ol Donyo Sabuk on 10 April 2023 (D. Ogada).

Fourth record for Kenya. A single bird was seen and photographed at Castle Forest Station (Mt Kenya) on 26 August 2023 (W. Wachira).

Beaudouin's Snake Eagle *Circaetus beaudouini*

Second record for Tanzania. A single bird seen and photographed at Kitungule Gereza in Kagera Region on 25 November 2022 (M. Mcilvenna).

Levant Sparrowhawk *Accipiter brevipes*

Fourth record for Uganda. A single bird was seen and photographed 12 km east of Moroto, Karamoja District on 22 January 2022 (V. Sthamer and S. Hatfield).

Greater Kestrel *Falco rupicoloides*

Second record for Uganda. A single bird was seen and photographed (Fig. 3) in Kidepo National Park on 23 February 2022 (J. Odongo).

Eleonora's Falcon *Falco eleonorae*

Fifth record for Uganda. A single bird was seen and photographed at Rubanda, western Uganda on 3 November 2022 (H. Cotter, S. Davies and S. Ibrahim).

White-breasted Cuckooshrike *Ceblepyris pectoralis*

This species is thought to be at possible risk of extinction in Kenya. Two birds were seen and photographed (Fig. 3) at Kanyakwot, near Kapenguria, West Pokot on 15 September 2023. (J. Omenya).

Figure 3. Greater Kestrel *Falco rupicoloides* (left: J. Odongo), and White-breasted Cuckooshrike *Ceblepyris pectoralis* (right: J. Omenya).

Ortolan Bunting *Emberiza hortulana*

Second record for Uganda. A single bird was seen and photographed (Fig. 4) at Kampala on 2 October 2022 (A. Lorand).

Mascarene Martin *Phedina borbonica*

Fifth record for Kenya. Four birds seen and photographed at Marara wetland, Dakatcha, near Malindi on 17 June 2023 (A. Scott Kennedy).

Irania (White-throated Robin) *Irania gutturalis*

First record for Uganda. A single adult female seen and photographed at Tororo on 3 March 2023 (H. Byaruhanga).

Arnot's Chat *Myrmecocichla arnotti*

First record for Kenya. A single bird was seen and photographed (Fig. 4) at Sagala Lodge, near Voi, Taita District, between 29 December 2022 and 2 January 2023 (B. Kanaka and B. Hillier).

Figure 4. Ortolan Bunting *Emberiza hortulana* (left: A. Lorand), and Arnot's Chat *Myrmecocichla arnotti* (right: B. Kanaka and B. Hillier).

Category A(ii): Fully accepted subspecies

Tropical Shearwater *Puffinus bailloni nicolae*
A well-prepared specimen sent to AMNH New York by John Williams back in 1963 and identified at the time as *Procellaria* sp. has been critically examined and confirmed as an example of *Puffinus bailloni nicolae* and not the nominate form, as had earlier been assumed (Bradley *et al.* 2023, Turner 2025a).

Bare-faced Go-away-bird *Corythaixoides personatus personatus*
Fourth record for Kenya. Two birds were seen and photographed at Qultipe (west of Moyale) on 2 May 2023 (M. Adamjee, P. Steward, A. Hinkle, V. Ikawa and A. Waki).

Category F: Fully accepted hybrids

Crested/European Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus / apivorus*
First record for Tanzania. A single bird was seen and photographed at Morogoro on 9 November 2022 (L. Shallom).

Records not accepted

Western Reef Heron *Egretta gularis schistacea*. One near the Ngezi Forest, Pemba Island on 28 October 2018. Photographic evidence submitted deemed inconclusive.

Grey-headed Batis *Batis orientalis*. One west of Moyale on 1 May 2023. Evidence submitted deemed inconclusive.

Year 2024

Category A(i): Fully accepted species.

Black-headed Lapwing *Vanellus tectus*
Second record for Tanzania. Three birds seen and photographed at Kagera Sugar Estate on 18 December 2023 (C. Davis).
Third record for Tanzania. Six birds seen and photographed at Ngorongoro Crater on 17 May 2024 (I. Kilusu).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*
Second record for Tanzania. A single bird seen and photographed at Dar es Salaam on 20 March 2019 (R. Marais).
Third record for Tanzania. A single bird seen and photographed at Dar es Salaam on 30 December 2023 (R. Marais).

Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini*
First record for Kenya and the East African Region. A single bird seen and photographed 18 km south of Malindi on 8 January 2024 (B. Kanaka and B. Hillier). See Bradley *et al.* 2024a.

Saunders's Tern *Sternula saundersi*
First record for Kenya, and possibly the East African region. A single bird seen and photographed on Manda Island on 7 July 2014 (J. Pitteloud). See also Turner 2025b: 61.

Short-toed Snake Eagle *Circaetus gallicus*
Fifth record for Kenya. A single bird seen and photographed near Marsabit on 26 January 2024 (T. Butynski and Y. de Jong).

Beaudouin's Snake Eagle *Circaetus beaudouini*
Third record for Tanzania. A single bird seen and photographed at Kagera Sugar Estate on 7 February 2024 (C. Davis).
Fourth record for Tanzania. A single bird seen and photographed at Kagera Sugar Estate on 16 March 2024 (C. Davis).

Madagascar Harrier *Circus macrosceles*
First record for Tanzania and the East African Region. A single adult bird seen and photographed (Fig. 5) on Zanzibar on 16 August 2024 (M. Blok).

Figure 5. Both photos, Madagascar Harrier *Circus macrosceles* (M. Blok).

Eurasian Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*
Third record for Tanzania. A single bird seen and photographed in northern Serengeti on 12 December 2023 (M. Mohammed).

Speckle-breasted Woodpecker *Dendropicos poecilolaemus*
First record for Tanzania. A single bird seen and photographed in a swampy area around the Kagera River on 18 June 2024 (F. Atasalan).

Piapiac *Ptilostomus afer*
First record for Tanzania. A single bird seen and photographed at Kagera Sugar Estate on 8 November 2023 (C. Davis).
Second record for Tanzania. Two birds seen and photographed at Kagera Sugar Estate on 27 February 2024 (C. Davis).

Rosy Starling *Pastor roseus*
Third record for Kenya. A single bird seen and photographed in Tsavo West National Park on 10 February 2024 (E. Malamba).

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Scopus, Journal of East African Ornithology

Scopus has been published by the Bird Committee of the East Africa Natural History Society for the past 48 years. Commenting on the health of the journal during its first 30 years, Jeremy Lindsell, in an editorial in 2007 (Vol 26: 52), gave credit to the efforts made to keep the journal going by a number of people who have been members of the Editorial Board, especially Graeme Backhurst. Graeme was the first editor, a post he held for an amazing 19 years, before quietly handing over the task to Leon Bennun. Successive editors were Jeremy Lindsell, Mwangi Githiru, Darcy Ogada, David Pearson, James Bradley, and, in recent years, Graeme Backhurst again. They are to be thanked, by all with an interest in East African birds, for maintaining a high standard of publication, often in the face of many difficulties.

Not least of these difficulties has been the considerable variation in the number of papers and short notes of a sufficiently high standard submitted each year. For the first 19 years there was no shortage of offerings, with the number of issues for each volume varying from two to five (in the very first years), and the number of pages always over 100, with 208 pages in 1993 (vol. 15). From 1978 to 1991 there were those invaluable annual East African Bird Reports (compiled almost entirely by David Pearson). Unfortunately, these were not continued, although rarities have been well documented in recent years (information essential to ensure that important observations are not buried on the internet or in the grey literature). Indeed, there was overall a marked, and regrettable, decline in the number of pages that appeared each year from the early 2000s.

The topics covered have usually been distributional, an essential backbone for all conservation efforts, which are also treated frequently. Selection is perhaps invidious, but papers that I consider particularly outstanding have been the documentation of the long-term migration study based at Ngulia in Tsavo West National Park, pioneered by Graeme Backhurst and David Pearson (several accounts in early years culminating in the *Scopus* Special Supplement No. 4 of 2014), and a complete account of the ecology of a country's forest avifauna (Malawi, by Françoise Dowsett-Lemaire). Of the five Special Supplements to *Scopus* that have been published, two have certainly become standard national references, for Somalia (John Ash and John Miskell) and South Sudan (Gerhard Nikolaus), while a bibliography of the contents of *Scopus* volumes 1 to 15 was published by Don Turner in 1993.

The combination of fewer submissions of quality and the difficulty of finding an editor and competent referees suggests that the future of *Scopus* is now in doubt. Indeed, when asked to write this note, I was afraid that I was being invited to write yet another obituary. An optimist might hope that any demise now might be remedied later. If ever *Scopus* were to be resurrected in its present format there would need to exist a competent editorial committee and a sufficient supply of well-researched and well-presented contributions, if the very high standards set by *Scopus* over the past 48 years are to be maintained. When *Scopus* first appeared in March 1977, I was keeper of Natural History at Livingstone Museum in Zambia, and I remember thinking that, at last, East African ornithology was to be documented as thoroughly as it deserved. In a modest way *Scopus* has fulfilled the role that *Ostrich* has for southern Africa. One must hope that in some way the momentum achieved by the efforts of ornithologists in East Africa can be maintained.

But I am not optimistic. I am unaware of any future plans from the Bird Committee of the East Africa Natural History Society. Correspondents have told me that perhaps it is felt *Scopus* should appeal to a more popular readership, but if so, what role are publications such as *The Journal of East African Natural History* and *Swara* already playing? There is an urgent need to harness the enthusiasm and competence of the many amateur (often young) bird watchers, such as I have witnessed in Tanzania. In that country there is an active WhatsApp group, organized by Neil Baker (with the support of David Moyer). I would hope this is the situation elsewhere in East Africa (if not, it should be). Their efforts will be lost to science if just allowed to disappear into 'The Cloud', and a great disservice will be done to African naturalists. If only as an occasional internet newsletter (available as a PDF) some effort should be made by the Bird Committee to maintain the documentation of rarities, new records and distributional surveys, all so important to support conservation efforts hitherto provided by *Scopus*. In the 1990s and early 2000s this role was filled by the unpretentious, but very useful *Kenya Birds*. The Bird Committee should see this as an opportunity to build up the competence of future generations, rather than (it would seem) silently let *Scopus* die.

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Editorial

This is a sad day for me: I wrote the first *Scopus* editorial in March 1977, and now I am writing another one at a time when the future of the journal is in some doubt. As far as I know, the Bird Committee has been unable to find anyone to continue as editor, and the feeling amongst those attending committee members is that *Scopus* should change and become more 'popular', less 'scientific'.

As someone who has been very closely involved with *Scopus* from the early planning in 1976, through to the publication of the first issue in March 1977, I urge the Bird Committee to reconsider and to keep *Scopus* mothballed until a new editor can be found. The two most recent editors, Darcy Ogada and James Bradley, as well as the doyen of East African ornithology, Don Turner, share this view.

Scopus has earned a tremendous amount of respect throughout the ornithological world. To close it down or drastically change its terms of reference seems incredibly foolish. Truly a case of 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it'. If the feeling is that a less 'scientific' publication is needed, why not resurrect the once excellent *Kenya Birds* so that distributional records of at least Kenya birds can be verified and published? It is also worth reminding the largely Nairobi-based members of the Bird Committee that *Scopus* has always covered the ornithology of eastern Africa, so the adoption of a wider, regional perspective should surely be the way forward, especially considering that most birds do not respect man-made national boundaries.

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Scopus: Journal of East African Ornithology welcomes original contributions — which have not been published elsewhere — on all aspects of the ornithology of eastern Africa, encompassing the area from Sudan, Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa countries south to Mozambique, and including the Malagasy region.

Contributions comprise original (full) papers, short communications (normally under two pages in length, including short notes and records) and letters. Original articles and short communications should present some new findings that have not been published or been submitted for publication elsewhere. All submissions are subject to peer review. They will be assessed by at least one member of the editorial board as well as by independent referees.

The text must be written in (British) English following the preferred (first) spelling of the *Oxford dictionary of English*, Third edition, 2010, or later. Please type nothing in all capital letters unless the word is always spelled that way, e.g., 'UK'. Please include between four and six keywords for full papers, only. When preparing your manuscript, please follow the conventions used in *Scopus* and refer to a recent issue (volume 34 onwards) for guidance. Some examples of conventions are:

Papers: Title, authors' names, Summary or Abstract, body of the paper with any desired sub-headings, Acknowledgements (if any), References, names and addresses of the authors, Appendices (if any).

Short notes: Title, text (no Summary required), Acknolwedgements (if any), References, names and addresses of the authors.

Units: Metric units and their SI equivalents and abbreviations should be used. The

abbreviation should be preceded by a space, '5 km' not '5km'. Latitudes and longitudes in degrees and minutes, not decimal degrees.

Dates: 21 February 2001 [note the order, no comma, not 21st].

Time of day: 13:00 [note colon, no 'hours', 'hrs' or 'h'; 'h' is a unit of time, not of time of day].

Names of birds: For example, African Thrush *Turdus pelios* [no comma, no parentheses, no author's name or date (unless pertinent to a point in the text)].

References cited in the text: Cite multiple references in chronological order, separated by commas, e.g. (Njoroge & Launay 1998, Mlingwa *et al.* 2001) [note ampersand, italicized '*et al.*', no comma between authors' names and date].

List references at the end of an article: See the examples below for format. When printed, authors' names appear in capitals and small capitals *but they should be typed in ordinary roman as shown below.*

Give names of journals in full. (For books, after author(s), year of publication and title, give town followed by the publisher.) Examples:

Cordeiro, N.J. & Githiru, M. 2000. Conservation evaluation for birds of *Brachylaena* woodland and mixed dry forest in northeast Tanzania. *Bird Conservation International* 10: 47–65.

Stuart, S.N., Jensen, F.P., Brøgger-Jensen, S. & Miller, R.I. 1993. The zoogeography of the montane forest avifauna of eastern Tanzania pp. 203–228 *in* Lovett, J.C. & Wasser, S.K. (eds) *Biogeography and ecology of the rainforests of Eastern Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Urban, E.K., Fry, C.H. & Keith, S. (eds) 1986. *The birds of Africa*. Vol. 2. London: Academic Press.

BirdLife International 2013. Species factsheet: *Balearica regulorum*. Downloaded from http://www:birdlife.org on 14/05/2013.

Both English and scientific names of birds should be given when the species is first mentioned — in the title and in the text — thereafter only one name should be used but both English and scientific names should be given in captions to figures.

Bird names should be those of a stated work. Any deviations from this work should be noted and the reasons given.

Black-and-white or colour photographs and line illustrations should be provided as separate graphic files in JPEG or TIFF format. All articles should be submitted by email in Microsoft Word or as a Rich Text Format (RTF) file.

Please send all contributions to
The Editor, *Scopus: Journal of East African Ornithology*, Email:
scopus@naturekenya.org

Rare birds in East Africa

Records of rare birds from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda are assessed by the East Africa Rarities Committee. Records from other countries in the region can also be submitted for review and possible publication in *Scopus*. A full account of the record should be sent to the committee Chairman, Nigel Hunter (nigelhunter74@gmail.com) and the *Scopus* editor.

The East Africa Natural History Society

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National Bird Mapping Projects

Kenya Bird Map
kenyabirdmap.adu.org.za

Tanzania Bird Atlas
tanzaniabirdatlas.com